

Supreme Court, U. S.

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In the  
**Supreme Court of the United States**

OCTOBER TERM, 1976

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No.  
**76-1132**

**JULIO JOSE MARTINEZ HERNANDEZ, ET AL.,**  
PETITIONERS,

*v.*

**AIR FRANCE,**  
RESPONDENT.

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**PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO  
THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT**

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## INDEX

	Page
Opinions Below .....	1
Jurisdiction .....	2
Question Presented .....	2
Treaties .....	3
Statement .....	3
Reasons for the Allowance of the Writ .....	4
I. The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit has rendered a decision in conflict with deci- sions of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. ....	4
II. The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit has decided an important question of federal law which has not been, but should be, settled by this Court. ....	9
Conclusion	
Appendix:	
A. Memorandum Opinion of District Court, In re Tel Aviv, 405 F.Supp. 154 .....	13
B. Opinion of Court of Appeals, No. 76-1146, November 19, 1976 .....	21
C. Judgment of the Court of Appeals, November 19, 1976 .....	32
D. Warsaw Convention, 49 Stat. 3000 TS 876 (1934) .....	33
E. Montreal Agreement, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966) .....	42
F. Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc., No. 75-1990 (3d Cir., May 4, 1976) .....	49

## TABLE OF CITATIONS

## Cases

	Page
<i>Bacardi Corporation of America v. Domenech</i> , 311 U.S. 150 (1940) .....	8
<i>Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975) <i>Certiorari denied</i> , 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 4, 1976) .....	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11
<i>Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , No. 75-1990 (3 Cir., May 4, 1976), <i>Petition for rehearing en banc granted</i> , June 3, 1976 .....	4, 6, 7, 8, 11
<i>Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , 396 F.Supp. 95 (W.D. Pa. 1975). .....	12
<i>Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co.</i> , 351 F.Supp. 702 (S.D. N.Y. 1972) .....	7
<i>In re Tel Aviv</i> , 405 F.Supp. 154 (D.P.R. 1975) .....	1, 2, 4, 7
<i>Martinez v. Air France</i> , No. 76-1146, (1 Cir. Nov. 19, 1976) .....	11
<i>MacDonald v. Air Canada</i> , 439 F.2d 1402 (1 Cir. 1971) .....	8
<i>United States v. Carver</i> , 260 U.S. 482 (1923) .....	9

## Treaties

Warsaw Convention, 49 Stat. 3000 TS 876 (1934) .....	5, 8, 9, 10, 11
Montreal Agreement, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966) .....	6, 10

## Statutes

28 U.S.C. Section 1254 (1) .....	2
Section 1292(b) (1970) .....	4
Section 1331 (1958) .....	3
Section 1332 (1964) .....	3

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**PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO  
THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT**  
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Petitioners pray that a writ of certiorari issue to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, entered in the above entitled case, on November 19, 1976.

**Opinions Below**

The memorandum of opinion and order of the District Court for the District of Puerto Rico on respondent's motion for summary judgment and petitioners' cross-motions for partial summary judgment is reported as *In re*

*Tel Aviv*, 405 F.Supp. 154 (D.P.R. 1975), and is printed as Appendix A, pp. 13-20. The opinion of the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, not yet reported, is printed as Appendix B, pp. 21-31.

### **Jurisdiction**

The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit was entered on November 19, 1976 and copy thereof is appended to this petition as Appendix C, p. 32. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. Section 1254 (1).

### **Question Presented**

The question presented for review is:

Are the victims of a terrorist attack perpetrated while passengers are clearing immigration and awaiting delivery of baggage entitled to the protection of Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention?

The question comprises the following subsidiary questions:

Is a distinction justified between operations of embarking and operations of disembarking in the application of article 17 of the Warsaw Convention?

Should the applicability of article 17 of the Warsaw Convention depend upon varying procedures at different airports?

Are not the victims entitled to the more liberal interpretation of the treaty?

### **Treaties Involved**

The Convention For Unification Of Certain Rules Relating To International Transportation By Air (The Warsaw Convention), 49 Stat. 3000 TS 876, reprinted in 49 U.S.C. Section 1502 note (1970), is set forth in pertinent part in Appendix D.

Agreement CAB 18900 (The Montreal Agreement), 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966), is set forth in Appendix E.

### **Statement**

This petition encompasses three separate actions filed in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, which were consolidated for purposes of appeal to the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. The basis for federal jurisdiction in the court of first instance in each of the cases was federal question (treaty) jurisdiction. 28 U.S.C. Section 1331 (1958). Petitioners German De Oleo Encarnacion (Civil No. 174-73 in the District Court) and Julio Jose Martinez Hernandez (Civil No. 313-73 in the District Court) also based jurisdiction on diversity of citizenship. 28 U.S.C. Section 1332 (1964).

Each of the petitioners was a member, or is related to a deceased member, of a large group of Puerto Rico tourists traveling on defendant Air France's Flight No. 132 to Tel Aviv. Flight No. 132 originated in New York, with intermediate stops at Paris and Rome. Three Japanese, in the service of a Palestinian terrorist organization, boarded the plane at Rome. On arrival at Lod Airport, the plane came to a halt about one-third to one-half mile from the Terminal Building. The passengers descended movable stairs to the ground and then walked or rode on a bus to the terminal. There, they presented their passports for inspection by Israeli immigration officials and then passed



into the main baggage area of the terminal. While the passengers were awaiting the arrival of the last baggage from the plane, the three Japanese terrorists removed their luggage from the conveyor belt, produced submachine guns and hand grenades, and opened fire upon persons in the baggage area, killing or wounding many, including plaintiff and plaintiffs' decedents.

Cross motions for summary judgment were filed in the District Court in each case. Petitioners' motions for partial summary judgment on the issue of liability were denied, and respondent's motions for summary judgment were granted. 405 F. Supp. 154. A consolidated interlocutory appeal, 28 U.S.C. Sections 1292(b) (1970), to the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit was taken. The decision of the District Court was affirmed. *Julio Jose Martinez Hernandez, et al. v. Air France*, No. 76-1146 (1st. Cir. Nov. 19, 1976), App. P. 21.

### Reasons for the Allowance of the Writ

#### I. THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT HAS RENDERED A DECISION IN CONFLICT WITH DECISIONS OF THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT AND THE THIRD CIRCUIT.

The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit appears to accept and apply the tripartite test of activity, location, and carrier control enunciated in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31, 33 (2d Cir. 1975), *certiorari denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 4, 1976), and applied partially in *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, No. 75-1990 (3d Cir. May 4, 1976), *petition for rehearing en banc granted*, June 3, 1976, App. p. 49. Nevertheless, the restricted application of the test conflicts with the principles

on which the decision in the Second and Third Circuits were based.

In *Day* the Second Circuit adopted a relatively broad construction of Article 17 of the Convention to afford protection to the passengers, 528 F.2d at 34, that protection now ranking high among the goals which the Warsaw signatories seek to serve. 528 F.2d at 37. The Court adopted the view that interpretation of a treaty must change to be consistent with changing times. 528 F.2d at 35. This view is echoed in the decision of the Third Circuit which refers to the dangers of violence, whether in the form of terrorism, hijacking or sabotage, as being "... today so closely associated with air transportation ..." App. p. 55. Contrasted with this approach to interpretation and application is that of the First Circuit in the instant case, which seeks to determine and apply the intent of the drafters as of the time the Convention was initially adopted.

"We are persuaded that the delegates understood embarkation and disembarkation as essentially the physical activity of entering or exiting from an aircraft, rather than as a broader notion of initiating or ending a trip." App. p. 28.

The discussion following this statement of the applicable principle of interpretation as seen by the First Circuit acknowledges the conflict between the approach of this Court and those of the Second and Third Circuits. The Court below rejects holding the carrier liable in cases such as the one at bar based on modern tort law theories. It rejects distribution among all air travelers of the losses occasioned by tragedies such as that giving rise to the present case. This rejection is based on fear of doing violence to the history and language of the Warsaw Convention. App. p. 28.

Such approach ignores totally the subsequent conduct of the parties signatory in adopting the Montreal Agreement, expounded at length in *Day*, 528 F.2d at 36-37, and also referred to in *Evangelinos* at footnote 7, App. p. 52. While appearing to apply the same test as the other Circuits and to reach a different result on the facts, the decision in this case really results from the application of a restrictive, historically inaccurate test. The quotation given above from the opinion herein essentially adopts a location test limited to the aircraft or immediate means of access thereto or egress therefrom. That test was discarded by the original drafters of the Convention, as the Courts have recognized. *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d at 34-35. The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit is of the opinion that the minutes of the Warsaw proceedings undermine the contention that the delegates wished to implement a rigid rule based solely on location of the accident. 528 F.2d at 35.

The decision of the Court of Appeals herein conflicts so openly with the decisions in *Day* and *Evangelinos*, *supra*, that both of the latter cases would have resulted in judgments for the defendant if the same criteria were applied. This conflict is best demonstrated in the words of each of the Courts.

The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit states:

"A fundamental premise of the argument for expanding carrier liability in this case is that the risk of death or injury in a terrorist attack is appropriately regarded as a characteristic risk of air travel. Cf. *Day*, 528 F.2d at 37-38; *Evangelinos*, slip opinion at 7. We do not think that this can be said of the sort of senseless act of violence involved in this case. The risk of violence at the hands of zealots is all too present in any public place whether it be a bank, courthouse, university

campus, an Olympic village, or airport. Unlike the risk of hijacking, see *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co.*, 351 F. Supp. 702, 706-07 (S.D. N.Y. 1972), *aff'd per curiam*, 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973), where the aircraft and the fact of air travel are prerequisites to the crime, we think the risk of random attack such as that which gave rise to this litigation is not a risk characteristic of travel by aircraft, but rather is a risk of living in a world such as ours. See *Evangelinos*, *supra*, — F.2d at — (Seitz, C.J., dissenting) (slip op. at 3)." App. pp. 28-29 (footnote omitted).

The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, in contrast, stated in *Day*, *supra*:

"Since 1929, the risks of aviation have changed dramatically in ways unforeseeable by the Warsaw framers. Air travel hazards, once limited to aerial disasters, have unhappily come to include the sort of terrorism exemplified by the Athens attack. As that incident graphically demonstrates, these new perils often spill over into the airline terminal." 528 F.2d at 37-38. (footnote omitted).

The Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit agrees that violence is closely associated with air transportation.

"Since the danger of violence — whether in the form of terrorism, hijacking or sabotage — is today so closely associated with air transportation, we have little difficulty in concluding that the plaintiffs in this case were not located in a 'safe place,' far removed from risks now inherent in air transportation. We note that another terrorist attack on airline passengers recently occurred in Israel. See *In re Tel Aviv*, *supra*



at note 9. To conclude otherwise would be to freeze the Warsaw Convention in its 1929 mold, when air travel was in its infancy, and to ignore current air travel procedures and the special risks created by the type of violence that resulted in this tragedy." *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*, App. p. 55.

As a matter of fact, the terrorist attack in the case at bar is even more closely associated with air travel and with the control of the defendant since the terrorists in this case, unlike those in *Day* and *Evangelinos*, were passengers on the same aircraft as the victims. Contrary to the conclusion drawn by the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, the aircraft and the fact of air travel were intimately related to and were "prerequisites" to the crime in this case.

The interpretative technique of the Court of Appeals herein is even more restrictive than that contended for by the defendant in any of the cases. Since the Court of Appeals looks to the original intent at the time of adoption of the Warsaw Convention, and since terrorist attacks in connection with air travel were unknown at that time, consistent application of its principles of interpretation would require the Court to exclude terrorist attacks from coverage as not falling within the term "accident". Some intimation of this view is given by a prior decision of the same Court. *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402, 1405 (1st Cir. 1971). Nevertheless, the defendant in each of the cases has stipulated that the attack was an "accident."

This Honorable Court has directed that where a provision of a treaty fairly admits of two constructions, one restricting, the other enlarging rights which may be claimed under it, the more liberal interpretation is to be preferred. *Bacardi Corporation of America v. Domenech*, 311 U.S., 150, 163 (1940). It is evident that the Court of Appeals adopted the more restrictive interpretation in this case:

"... we think that the rejection of the CITEJA draft does imply that the carrier is not to be held liable for all damage which might befall a traveler as he goes about various activities in the airport before or after his flight." App. p. 28. (footnote omitted).

The apparent conflict between the decision herein and the decisions in the Second and Third Circuits should be resolved by this Court, with the formulation of the appropriate test for determination of coverage.

## II. THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT HAS DECIDED AN IMPORTANT QUESTION OF FEDERAL LAW WHICH HAS NOT BEEN, BUT SHOULD BE, SETTLED BY THIS COURT.

This Honorable Court has not interpreted Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention. An authoritative interpretation will result in considerable economy for the courts and for litigants. The formulation of the appropriate test for determination of coverage will guide judges and attorneys. Extrajudicial disposition of claims is hardly possible when the parties do not even have a yardstick for measuring values, and certainly the applicability of Article 17 is an important factor in determining values.

The denial of certiorari in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 4, 1976), cannot be interpreted as approval and tacit adoption of the test there postulated. *United States v. Carver*, 260 U.S. 482, 490 (1923). The disaffection of the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit for that test is apparent from the decision of which review is here sought. Neither uniformity nor certainty are promoted when relatively insignificant and fortuitous details become determining factors. In the view of the Court of Appeals in this case, such details as whether or not pas-

sengers have occasion to retrieve baggage, the distance at which the aircraft is parked from the terminal building, and that tenuous element of "control", are the bases of decision.

If the specific procedures followed at each air terminal are the determinative factors, a settled rule is never possible, since procedures vary from place to place and from time to time. Petitioners do not contend that such procedures are totally irrelevant, but rather that concern with "control" of the procedures is in effect rejection of the concept of absolute liability which is the keystone of the Warsaw Convention as supplemented by the Montreal Agreement. The resistance of the Court below to this concept is typified by the statement:

"There is no indication that airline personnel were dictating to the passengers how they were to go about retrieving their baggage or leaving the terminal."  
App. p. 26.

Airlines rarely dictate in this fashion. More importantly, this statement begs the issue. The question, and test, really is whether the passenger was in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking — not who controlled those operations. Can the result differ logically depending upon whether a passenger is required to deposit baggage with a porter at the entrance to the terminal building or with a clerk at an interior check-in counter? The significant facts are not physical location, nor control of the activity, but rather the nature of the activity. The passenger would not be at the particular time and place were he not engaged in the operation of embarking or disembarking from an aircraft. The liability of the carrier does not depend upon notions of fault or avoidability of the incident, but rather upon the relation of carrier and passenger.

Naturally some reasonable line must be drawn. The Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in *Evangelinos*, *supra*, speaks in terms of the carrier's control over the passengers and the likelihood of injury by causes inherent in air transportation. App. p. 58. It is respectfully submitted that the two factors of "relationship" and a "risk inherent in air transportation" furnish the basis for fashioning an appropriate test. The former is the basis of coverage, and the latter limits the remoteness of the occurrence. The element of "control" is unsatisfactory since it remains in large measure at the discretion of the carrier or third parties. If the carrier requires passengers to check-in at a fixed time before departure, control exists in the sense that the passengers' presence in the terminal is dictated by the carrier. However, if the carrier does not provide a fixed waiting area, are not the passengers then left as "free agents roaming at will through the terminal"? *Day, supra*, 528 F.2d at 33; *Martinez v. Air France*, App. p. 26. Yet their presence and freedom to roam is the result of their being required to commence the operations of embarking at a time and place determined by the carrier. If a terrorist attack occurred in a waiting room provided by the carrier for its passengers, there would hardly be doubt as to coverage. Should the failure to take measures designed for passenger safety then result in exoneration, even under traditional concepts of negligence? Article 21 of the Convention protects the carrier against passengers who deviate from instructions and established procedures.

The suggestion has been made that a distinction is to be made between the operations of embarking and operations of disembarking, *Evangelinos, supra*, App. pp. 54-55; *Martinez v. Air France, supra*, App. p. 25. Article 17 indicates no basis for such distinction. The distinction, if justified, should be defined. As observed elsewhere, many of the steps involved in embarkation are just as essential, al-



though in reverse, to the steps one must take in disembarking, *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 396 F. Supp. 95, 102 (W.D. Pa. 1975).

An authoritative interpretation by this Court will benefit all. The formulation of an appropriate test of coverage will reduce future litigation.

### Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this petition for a writ of certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

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### APPENDIX A

IN RE TEL AVIV.  
Civ. A. Nos. 518-72 et al. and Civ.  
Nos. 174-73, 313-73 and 481-73.  
United States District Court,  
D. Puerto Rico.  
Dec. 9, 1975.

Jorge Ortiz Toro, Hato Rey, P.R., for plaintiffs.

William J. Junkerman, New York City, and Hartzell, Ydrach, Mellado, Santiago, Perez & Novas, San Juan, Puerto Rico, for Air France.

Harvey B. Nachman, San Juan, Puerto Rico, for plaintiffs.

Memorandum of Opinion and Order of the Court on defendant's motion for Summary Judgment and plaintiffs' cross-motions for partial Summary Judgment.  
GIGNOUX, District Judge.

These three actions seek to recover damages for deaths and personal injuries sustained by arriving international passengers on defendant airlines as the result of a terrorist attack in the baggage area of the Terminal Building of Lod International Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, on May 30, 1972. Plaintiffs claim liability without fault under the provisions of the Warsaw Convention, 49 Stat. 3000 (1934), as modified by the Montreal Agreement, 31 Fed.Reg. 7302 (1966), *both reprinted at* 49 U.S.C.A. § 1502 note (Supp. 1975).<sup>1</sup> Defendant has moved for summary judgment on the ground that the Warsaw Convention, as modified by the Montreal Agreement, is inapplicable to these actions, and

<sup>1</sup> Plaintiffs have waived the additional claims asserted in their original complaints under the 1955 Hague Protocol and the 1971 Guatemala Protocol, neither of which has been ratified by the United States. *See* 1 L. Kriendler, *Aviation Accident Law* §§ 12.01, 12B.01 (rev. ed. 1971).

plaintiffs have filed cross-motions for partial summary judgment on the issue of liability, asserting that the Convention does apply.

The material facts are undisputed. Plaintiff in No. 174-73 and plaintiffs' decedents in Nos. 313-73 and 481-73 were members of a large group of Puerto Rico tourists traveling on defendant Air France's Flight No. 132 to Tel Aviv. Flight No. 132 originated in New York, with intermediate stops at Paris and Rome. Three Japanese, in the service of a Palestinian terrorist organization, boarded the plane at Rome. On arrival at Lod Airport, the plane came to a halt about one-third to one-half mile from the Terminal Building. The passengers descended movable stairs to the ground and then walked or rode on a bus to the terminal. There, they presented their passports for inspection by Israeli immigration officials and then passed into the main baggage area of the terminal. While the passengers were awaiting the arrival of the last baggage from the plane, the three Japanese terrorists removed their luggage from the conveyor belt, produced submachine guns and hand grenades, and opened fire upon persons in the baggage area, killing or wounding many, including plaintiff and plaintiffs' decedents. From the time the passengers stepped out onto the movable stairs leading from the plane, all the facilities they used were owned and operated by the State of Israel or El Al, the Israeli National Airline, not by Air France.

[1] The Warsaw Convention, which was concededly applicable to plaintiffs' flight, provides uniform rules for international air travel. As modified by the Montreal Agreement, the Convention limits the carrier's liability for death or injury to \$75,000 per passenger and imposes liability without fault.<sup>2</sup> The scope of the carrier's liability under the Convention is determined by Article 17, which provides:

<sup>2</sup> The Montreal Agreement is not a treaty. Rather, it takes the form of an agreement among international air carriers, of which Air France is one, by which the signatory airlines agreed to include

The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger, if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or *in the course of any of the operations of* embarking or disembarking. (Emphasis supplied).

[2] Defendant concedes that the terrorist attack at Lod Airport was an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17. See *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co.*, 351 F.Supp. 702, 706-07 (S.D.N.Y. 1972), *aff'd mem.*, 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973). Defendant's contention is that when the attack occurred, the passengers, all of whom had exited from the aircraft and entered the Terminal Building, were no longer "in the course of any of the operations of . . . disembarking," and hence that the Convention does not apply to plaintiffs' claims. For the reasons to be stated, the Court concludes that the Convention is not applicable to these cases.

The disposition of the motions presently before the Court is clearly controlled by the recent decisions of the Court of

in their tariffs to be filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a "special contract" by which the carrier would waive its limitation of liability under the Convention up to \$75,000 per passenger and would concede its liability without fault with respect to flights originating, stopping or terminating in the United States. In return, the United States withdrew a notice of denunciation of the Convention. The Agreement was negotiated in 1966 between the United States Government and the International Air Transport Association, and was approved by the Civil Aeronautics Board. Agreement CAB 18900, approved, CAB Order No. E-23680, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966), *reprinted at* 49 U.S.C.A. § 1502 note (Supp. 1975). See also 1 L. Kriendler, *supra*, ch. 12A; Lowenfield & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L.Rev. 497 (1967).

The Montreal Agreement did not modify in any way the meaning of Article 17 of the Convention, the issue presented by the instant motions. See *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402, 1405n. (1st Cir. 1971); *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 396 F.Supp. 95, 100 (W.D.Pa.1975); 1 L. Kriendler, *supra*, §12A-2.



Appeals for this circuit in *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), a case substantially on all fours with the present actions. The plaintiff in *MacDonald*, an arriving international passenger on the defendant airline, suffered a fall while awaiting delivery of her suitcase in the baggage area at Logan International Airport in Boston. She claimed negligence of the airline, or in the alternative, its liability without fault under the provisions of the Warsaw Convention, as modified by the Montreal Agreement. The Court of Appeals unanimously upheld a directed verdict dismissing her complaint, both upon the ground that she had not proved any negligence and also upon the ground that the provisions of the Warsaw Convention were not applicable to her case. As to the latter ground, the court held, first, that the plaintiff had not shown there was an "accident," within the meaning of Article 17. As an alternative basis for its decision that the Warsaw Convention was not applicable, the court held that plaintiff's fall had not occurred in the course of disembarking operations. In this connection, Chief Judge Aldrich, writing for the court, stated, *id.* at 1405:

[T]he Convention requires that the accident occur in the course of disembarking operations. If these words are given their ordinary meaning, it would seem that the operation of disembarking has terminated by the time the passenger has descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means have been supplied and has reached a safe point inside of the terminal, even though he may remain in the status of a passenger of the carrier while inside the building. Examination of the Convention's original purposes reinforces this view. The most important purpose of the Warsaw Conference was the protection of air carriers from the crushing consequences of a catastrophic accident, a protection though necessary for the eco-

nomie health of the then emerging industry. Partially in return for the imposition of recovery limits, and partially out of recognition of the difficulty of establishing the cause of an air transportation accident, the Conference also placed the burden on the cashier [*sic*] of disproving negligence when an accident occurred. II Conference International De Droit Prive Aerien, 4-12 Octobre 1929, at 135-36 (1930); Message from the President of the United States Transmittting a Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules, Sen. Exec.Doc. No. G. 73rd Cong. 2d Sess. 3-4 (1934). Neither the economic rationale for liability limits, nor the rationale for the shift in the burden of proof, applies to accidents which are far removed from the operation of aircraft.\* Without determining where the exact line occurs, it had been crossed in the case at bar.

Subsequent to *MacDonald*, at least two other American courts have similarly dismissed Warsaw Convention claims for injuries suffered after the plaintiff passengers had reached the airport terminal building. *Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 13 Av.Cas. 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. 1974) (injury on escalator inside terminal); *Klein v. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines*, 46 A.D.2d 679, 360 N.Y.S.2d 60 (2d Dep't 1974) (injury on baggage conveyor belt in terminal at Lod International Airport). See also *Mache v. CIE Air France*, [1967] Revue Francaise de Droit Aerien 343 (Cour d'appel, Rouen) (injury in fall in airport customs yard). Cf. *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines*, 396 F.Supp. 95, 101-02 (W.D.Pa. 1975) (*pre-flight* terrorist attack in ter-

\* Neither does the imposition of liability without fault, as was effected, with respect to United States connected carriage, by the Montreal Agreement. The Agreement, as such, could not change the meaning of Article 17 of the Convention, but we believe its framers assumed the same restricted meaning of that article that we do.

minal). *But cf. Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 393 F.Supp. 217 (S.D.N.Y. 1975) (same).<sup>3</sup>

Plaintiffs in the instant case argue that *MacDonald* was incorrectly decided because the court failed to give adequate consideration to the legislative history of the Warsaw Convention, which, they say, was not called to the court's attention. The legislative history, however, makes clear that in drafting Article 17 the delegates to the Convention specifically intended to exclude from coverage accidents occurring to passengers inside an airport terminal building. *Minutes, Second International Conference on Private Aeronautical Law, October 4-12, 1929, Warsaw* 67-84, 205-06 (R. Horner & D. Legrez transl. 1975) ("Warsaw Minutes").

The Convention was the ultimate product of two conferences, at Paris in 1925 and at Warsaw in 1929. The Paris Conference established an interim committee, the Comité International Technique d'Experts Juridiques Aériens (CITEJA), to draft a proposed convention for submission to the second conference. Article 20 of this draft defined the scope of the carrier's liability both as to travelers and as to goods and baggage. It made the carrier liable "from the

<sup>3</sup> The District Courts in *Day* and *Evangelinos* divided over whether passengers injured in a terrorist attack at Hellenikon Airport, Athens, Greece, in August 1973 were "in the course of any of the operations of embarking" within the meaning of Article 17. When this attack occurred, plaintiffs were in the transit lounge, just about to board a flight to New York. The *Day* court held they were embarking and hence that the Convention applied; the *Evangelinos* court disagreed and held the Convention not applicable. The *Day* court, however, expressly distinguished the question of disembarkation, 393 F.Supp. at 222-23 (emphasis in original):

We distinguish readily the case of *Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 13 Av. Cas. 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. June 28, 1974), which involves a claimed disembarking. A passenger who has left the aircraft, unlike plaintiffs is not herded in lines, and has few activities if any, which the air carrier requires him to perform at all, or in any specific sequence as a condition of completing his journey. . . .

moment when travelers, goods or baggage enter in the aerodrome of departure to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination." *Id.* at 264. This provision was challenged as to travelers. *Id.* at 69-75, 78-81. The Draft Article was rejected by the delegates, *id.* at 82-83, and sent back to the drafting committee, where it was split into two separate articles: Article 17 for passengers and Article 18 for goods and baggage. *Id.* at 205-06. In adopting Article 18, the Conference substantially accepted the CITEJA proposal with respect to goods and baggage, agreeing that liability should attach while "the baggage or goods are in the [custody] of the carrier, whether in an airport or on board an aircraft . . ." *Id.* at 206. With respect to travelers, however, the Conference rejected the CITEJA draft in favor of the more limited coverage of Article 17, providing that the carrier is liable for damages sustained in the event of the injury or death of passengers only if the accident that caused the damage took place on board the aircraft or "in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking." *Id.* at 82-84, 205-06.

Whatever uncertainties there may be as to the precise line drawn by Article 17, the above legislative history indicates plainly that the intent of the Warsaw Conference in rejecting the CITEJA draft and in declining to impose in Article 17 the same extent of carrier liability for passengers as that provided by Article 18 for goods and baggage was clearly to exclude liability as to passengers for accidents which occur after the passenger "has reached a safe point inside of the terminal," and "which are far removed from the operation of aircraft." *MacDonald v. Air Canada, supra* at 1405; see *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, supra* at 100-01.

Subsequent commentary by Convention delegates and other aviation law writers confirms this view. Thus, Dr. Otto Riese, a German delegate, has written:



La Convention de Varsovie exclut donc les accidents survenus au cours des opérations préliminaires à l'embarquement et postérieures au débarquement, soit notamment pendant la période du déplacement du passager de la gare de ville à l'aérodrome, et lors de sa présence dans les locaux de l'aérogare. O. Riese & J. LaCour, *Precis de Droit Aérien* 265 (1951).

See A. Giannini, *Saggi di Diritto Aeronautico* 233 (1932), and D. Goedhuis, *Minutes, Fifth International Congress on Air Navigation, The Hague, 1930*, at 1173 (both as cited in *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, supra* at 101).

The Court holds that when the Lod Airport terrorist attack occurred, the passengers on defendant's Flight No. 132 had completed their transportation by air and were no longer "in the course of any of the operations of . . . disembarking." The Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement therefore do not apply to the present actions. Accordingly, plaintiffs' motions for partial summary judgment are denied; defendant's motions for summary judgment are granted; and judgment will be entered dismissing plaintiffs' complaints to the extent that they claim jurisdiction or liability without fault under the provisions of the Warsaw Convention, as modified by the Montreal Agreement.

It is so ordered.

## APPENDIX B

# United States Court of Appeals For the First Circuit

No. 76-1146

JUILO JOSE MARTINEZ HERNANDEZ, ET AL.,  
PLAINTIFFS, APPELLANTS,

v.

AIR FRANCE,  
DEFENDANT, APPELLEE.

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

[HON. EDWARD T. GIGNOUX,\* *U.S. District Judge*]  
(405 F. Supp. 154)

Before COFFIN, *Chief Judge*,  
McENTEE and CAMPBELL, *Circuit Judges*.

*Stanley L. Feldstein and Nachman, Feldstein, Gelpi, Toro & Hernandez* on brief for appellants.

*William J. Junkerman, Vicente M. Ydrach, Randal R. Craft, Jr., and William F. Martin, Jr.* on brief for appellee.

November 19, 1976

COFFIN, *Chief Judge*. This case arises out of an act of terrorism which occurred on May 30, 1972, in the baggage retrieval area of the terminal building at Lod International Airport located near Tel Aviv, Israel. Plaintiffs-appellants seek damages from defendant air carrier for death and personal injury, asserting that under the Warsaw Convention,

\* Of the District of Maine, sitting by designation.

as modified by the Montreal Agreement,<sup>1</sup> the defendant is liable without regard to fault for damages sustained in the attack. This is an interlocutory appeal, 28 U.S.C. § 1292(b) (1970), from the district court's dismissal of plaintiffs' Warsaw Convention claims. The single issue presented is whether the attack occurred while the passengers were disembarking within the meaning of article 17 of the Convention, which reads as follows:

"The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger, if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking."

Because the precise circumstances surrounding the terrorist act of May 30, 1972 are highly relevant to our disposition, we reproduce the pertinent portion of the district court's careful summation of the facts:

"[Plaintiffs] were members of a large group of Puerto Rico tourists traveling on defendant Air France's Flight No. 132 to Tel Aviv. Flight No. 132

<sup>1</sup> The Convention for Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Transportation by Air, the Warsaw Convention, done Oct. 12, 1929, 49 Stat. 3000, reprinted in 49 U.S.C. § 1502 note (1970), was the product of two international conferences held in the 1920s to establish uniform rules relating to air carriage documents and liability. Air carrier liability for death and bodily injury of passengers, article 17, was limited in amount to proven damages up to approximately \$8300, article 22, with a rebuttable presumption of carrier negligence, article 20. Dissatisfaction with the low liability limit culminated in the American notification of denunciation on November 15, 1965. A compromise was reached, the Montreal Agreement of 1966, see 44 C.A.B. 819 (1966), reprinted in 49 U.S.C. § 1502 note (1970), and the denunciation notice was withdrawn. The air carriers agreed, pursuant to article 22(1), to raise the liability limit to \$75,000 and to waive the due care defense. The result is a strict liability cause of action for damages within the scope of article 17. See generally, Lowenfeld & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967).

originated in New York, with intermediate stops at Paris and Rome. Three Japanese, in the service of a Palestinian terrorist organization, boarded the plane at Rome. On arrival at Lod Airport, the plane came to a halt about one-third to one-half mile from the Terminal Building. The passengers descended movable stairs to the ground and then walked or rode on a bus to the terminal. There, they presented their passports for inspection by Israeli immigration officials and then passed into the main baggage area of the terminal. While the passengers were awaiting the arrival of the last baggage from the plane, the three Japanese terrorists removed their luggage from the conveyor belt, produced submachine guns and hand grenades, and opened fire upon persons in the baggage area, killing or wounding many, including plaintiff and plaintiff's decedents." *In re Tel Aviv*, 405 F. Supp. 154, 155 (D. P.R. 1975).

The district court, citing our decision in *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), as a controlling precedent, held that the attack did not occur during disembarkation. In *MacDonald* we held that article 17 of the Warsaw Convention was not applicable to injuries sustained by an arriving passenger who fell in the baggage pickup area of an airport, both because there was insufficient evidence that the fall was the result of an accident and because the injury did not occur during disembarkation. 439 F.2d at 1404-05.

"If these words are given their ordinary meaning, it would seem that the operation of disembarking has terminated by the time the passenger has descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means have been supplied and has reached a safe point inside the terminal. . . ." *Id.* at 1405.



Other precedents concerning the application of article 17 to various factual situations involving arriving passengers support this reading. The phrase "operations of . . . disembarking" has been held not to cover injuries sustained where a passenger was hurt by a conveyor belt in the baggage pickup area, *Klein v. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines*, 46 App. Div. 2d 679, 360 N.Y.S. 2d 60 (1974), fell on an escalator after leaving the plane via a jetway but before reaching the health, immigration, baggage, and customs stations, *Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 13 Av. Cas. 17, 145 (S.D. N.Y. 1974), or fell over construction debris in an open air customs area while walking from the plane to the terminal, *Mache v. Air France*, [1967] Rev. Fr. Droit Aerien 343 (Cour d'Appel, Rouen), *aff'd* [1970] Rev. Fr. Droit Aerien 311 (Cour de Cassation).

Plaintiffs-appellants urge that *MacDonald* should be reexamined in light of recent decisions involving the applicability of article 17 to injuries sustained in a terrorist attack on departing passengers. *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 4, 1976); *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, — F.2d — (3d Cir., May 4, 1976), *petition for rehearing en banc granted*, June 3, 1976. Both of these cases involved an August 5, 1973 terrorist attack in which passengers departing from Athens were set upon as they were lining up for security check and boarding at the point of departure from the terminal to the aircraft, under the direction and supervision of employees of the carrier. Focusing on the activity in which the passengers were engaged, their location, and the extent to which they were under the control of the carrier, the *Day* and *Evangelinos* courts held that the attack occurred during embarkation and thus imposed liability on the carrier. We do not view our holding in *MacDonald* as necessarily foreclos-

ing the adoption of the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test,<sup>2</sup> and we believe that the nature of a plaintiff's activity when injured, its location, and the extent to which the airline was exercising control over plaintiff at the time of injury are certainly relevant considerations in determining the applicability of article 17. On the facts of this case, however, the application of these criteria require the conclusion that plaintiffs did not have a right to recover under article 17.

Considering first the passengers' activity, we note that at the time of the attack the passengers had already emerged from the aircraft, descended the stairs from the plane to the ground, traveled via bus or foot from the plane to the terminal, and presented their passports to the Israeli authorities. On these facts we do not believe it can be said that the passengers were still engaged in any activity relating to effecting their separation from the aircraft. All that remained to be done before the passengers left the airport was to pick up their luggage. We observe that passengers, who either carry no luggage or carry their luggage on the plane, will have no occasion to retrieve their baggage. It hardly seems, therefore, that such activity can constitute a necessary step in becoming separated from a plane.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>2</sup> Both the *Day* court, 528 F.2d at 34 n. 8, and the *Evangelinos* court, slip opinion at 6, suggested that the disembarkation situation was distinguishable.

<sup>3</sup> Appellants suggest that "the operations of . . . disembarking" continue until the passengers retrieve their baggage, terming this activity "the last contact between carrier and passenger," and noting that under article 18, a carrier's liability for damage to baggage extends until the baggage is retrieved. *See* article 18. We think the drafting history rebuts any suggestion that the liability for personal injury and that for damages to baggage are necessarily identical in scope. As we note *infra*, the framers rejected a rule imposing aerodrome to aerodrome liability for personal injury. The history, moreover, indicates that the questions of baggage liability and personal injury liability were intended to be absolutely distinct, *see* Minutes, Second International Conference on Private Aeronautical Law, October 4-12, 1929, Warsaw, p. 72 (R. Horner & D. Legrez transl. 1975), and, for that reason, were treated in separate articles.

passengers' location also militates against article 17 coverage in this case since the attack occurred inside the terminal building located approximately one-third to one-half mile from the point where the aircraft was parked.

We also believe that the control factor weighs against holding the carrier liable.<sup>4</sup> In sharp contrast to the factual situation in *Day* and *Evangelinos*, the passengers here were not segregated into a group at the direction of airline employees. There is no indication that airline personnel were dictating to the passengers how they were to go about retrieving their baggage or leaving the terminal.<sup>5</sup> Rather, the passengers appear to have been "free agents roaming at will through the terminal." *Day, supra*, 528 F.2d at 33. Thus we conclude that this tragedy did not occur during disembarkation.

Our review of the drafting history of the Convention reinforces our conclusion that article 17 does not cover this case. At the 1929 Warsaw conference the delegates had before them a draft prepared by a committee of experts, *Comite Internationale Technique d'Experts Juridique Aeriens*, CITEJA, which provided that the period of carriage, and hence of carrier liability, extended.

<sup>4</sup> Although the relevance of control, as opposed to activity or location, may be less apparent from the text and drafting history of the treaty, *but see* Remarks of the French delegate, Minutes, *supra* note 3 at 73 (the problem regarding the scope of liability for passengers "arises from the fact that the traveler has his independence"), we think that inasmuch as the carrier's duty to protect passengers from the acts of third parties arises not from the carrier's ability to control the third party but from the relationship between carrier and passenger, the scope of article 17 should be limited to those situations either where the carrier has taken charge of the passengers, or possibly where it customarily would have done so, *see generally*, Restatement (Second) of Torts § 314A (1965); Harper & Kime, *The Duty to Control the Conduct of Another*, 43 Yale L. J. 886, 898-904 (1934).

<sup>5</sup> It is true that there were Air France employees on hand at the terminal, but their job appears to have been to welcome and assist the passengers, not to prescribe procedures which passengers were obliged to follow.

"from the moment when the travelers, goods or baggage enter in the aerodrome of departure, up to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination . . . ." Minutes, *supra* note 3, at 67-68 [hereinafter "Minutes"].

This proposal encountered opposition and provoked debate among the delegates on the proper scope of carrier liability. The discussion of liability for passengers centered on two proposals: the initial aerodrome to aerodrome principle and a less well articulated, more restrictive, view variously expressed as "from the moment when the travelers have boarded", Minutes 71, or "when [the passenger] embarks on the aircraft", Minutes 82. Mr. Ripert of France advanced the view that it was pointless to seek a definitive formula and therefore the text should

"employ a general formula — 'during air carriage' — in leaving to the courts the duty of deciding in each case if one is within the contract of carriage." Minutes 73.

Sir Alfred Dennis of Britain proposed that votes be taken on the "questions of principle" concerning carrier liability and that the matter be submitted to the drafting committee. Minutes 80. This proposal was adopted, and in the vote on liability for passengers the CITEJA draft was rejected in favor of the more restrictive view.<sup>6</sup> Minutes 83. The drafting committee produced the current language of article 17, "on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the oper-

<sup>6</sup> The British delegate summed up the "question of principle" which could be put to a vote as follows:

"[A]s regards travelers, does liability begin, as it said in the draft, upon the entrance into the aerodrome of departure, or does it begin when the traveler is on board the aircraft?" Minutes 80.

Similarly, the Brazilian delegate stated:

"It's a question of saying, whether the liability of the carrier begins as soon as the traveler enters into the aerodrome, which is a public place, or when he embarks on the aircraft." Minutes 82.



ations of embarking or disembarking", and this text was adopted without further discussion. Minutes 166.

While it is true that this drafting history does not determine the precise meaning of article 17, we think it does illuminate the intention of the Warsaw Convention drafters. We are persuaded that the delegates understood embarkation and disembarkation as essentially the physical activity of entering or exiting from an aircraft, rather than as a broader notion of initiating or ending a trip. Although the delegates did not seek to resolve the line drawing problems presented by close cases — cases in which the tripartite test of *Day-Evangelinos* may be useful guides for decision — we think that the rejection of the CITEJA draft does imply that the carrier is not to be held liable for all damage which might befall a traveler as he goes about various activities in the airport before or after his flight.<sup>7</sup>

We recognize that an argument can be advanced for holding the carrier liable in cases such as the one at bar based on modern tort law theories. It might be thought proper to hold the carrier liable as a means of distributing among all air travelers the losses occasioned by tragedies such as that giving rise to the present case. *See Day, supra*, 528 F.2d at 34. We are not unsympathetic to this approach. But, if its application is not to do violence to the history and language of the Warsaw Convention, there should, it seems to us, be a close logical nexus between the injury and air travel per se.

A fundamental premise of the argument for expanding carrier liability in this case is that the risk of death or

<sup>7</sup> We note that the hypothetical cases which the delegates posed as problems concerned such cases as accidents occurring as one stepped onto the stairs leading to the aircraft, Minutes 78, 81, or after boarding but before takeoff, Minutes 74, 77. By contrast there was no doubt that injuries sustained, for example, while eating in an airport restaurant, Minutes 72, walking through the airport, Minutes 73, 75, or while walking through town during a stopover, Minutes 80, would not be covered.

injury in a terrorist attack is appropriately regarded as a characteristic risk of air travel. *Cf. Day*, 528 F.2d at 37-38; *Evangelinos*, slip opinion at 7. We do not think that this can be said of the sort of senseless act of violence involved in this case. The risk of violence at the hands of zealots is all too present in any public place whether it be a bank, courthouse, university campus, an Olympic village, or airport. Unlike the risk of hijacking, *see Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co.*, 351 F. Supp. 702, 706-07 (S.D. N.Y. 1972), *aff'd per curiam*, 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973), where the aircraft and the fact of air travel are prerequisites to the crime,<sup>8</sup> we think the risk of a random attack such as that which gave rise to this litigation is not a risk characteristic of travel by aircraft, but rather is a risk of living in a world such as ours. *See Evangelinos, supra*, — F.2d at — (Seitz, C.J., dissenting) (slip op. at 3).

We observe that to expand carrier liability under article 17 to include all terrorist attacks at airports would produce anomalous results. Under article 17, only passengers could have a right to recover. It is unlikely, however, that nonpassengers would be injured by attacks which occur in locations such as baggage retrieval areas. To give passengers who are so injured a strict liability remedy against the carrier — who, unlike the terminal operator, presumably has no control over the situation — but to relegate the nonpassengers to their remedies under local law, would be odd indeed. It would seem to be more rational in this grey area, not clearly involving disembarking, to treat passengers and nonpassengers alike. This would mean leaving

<sup>8</sup> The distinction between the hijacking situation and the sort of random attack involved in this case may at times be difficult to draw. We note, for example, that the terrorists who perpetrated the crimes at the Athens airport involved in the *Day* and *Evangelinos* cases took hostages and demanded an aircraft with which to escape after they carried out the attack on passengers waiting in the transit lounge. *See Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 393 F. Supp. 217, 219 (S.D. N.Y.), *aff'd*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975).

them to the remedies of local law. These, at least in most cases, would not be illusory. Moreover, contemporary theories of cost allocation may well be reflected in the provisions of local law.

We hold that on the particular facts of this case, where the passengers were waiting for their baggage inside the terminal building, had left the aircraft and its immediate vicinity, and were no longer acting at the direction of the carrier, the process of disembarkation had been completed and article 17 of the Warsaw Convention, therefore, is not applicable.

*Affirmed.*

McENTEE, *Circuit Judge* (concurring). I concur in the result reached by the court and in its reasoning to the extent that it applies the criteria described in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 4, 1976).<sup>1</sup> That opinion suggested that claims under Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention are not to be resolved in terms of a simple location test (where the injury occurred), but rather by application of "a tripartite test based on activity (what the plaintiffs were doing), control (at whose direction) and location." *Id.* at 33. I believe that this tripartite test represents a reasonable and flexible basis for analyzing Article 17 cases, because it is consistent both with the terms of the Convention and with the realities of modern air travel. In my opinion, the Second Circuit's holding concerning the embarkation provision of Article 17 is equally applicable to disembarkation cases:

<sup>1</sup> See also *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, No. 75-1990 (3d Cir., May 4, 1976), *petition for rehearing en banc granted*, June 3, 1976.

"We are of the view that the words 'in the course of any of the operations of embarking' do not exclude events transpiring within a terminal building. Nor, do these words set forth any strictures on location. Rather, the drafters of the Convention looked to whether the passenger's *actions* were a part of the operation or process of embarkation . . . ." *Id.* at 33 (footnote omitted).

Examining the instant claim in the light of this tripartite test, I am persuaded that Air France was no longer in real *control* of the passengers' activity when the terroristic attack took place.<sup>2</sup> Although, when viewed in terms of the other two factors, this case presents a close question, I believe that the airline's control was so exiguous or even non-existent that I do not think that Article 17 applies. For these reasons, I concur in the judgment of the court.

<sup>2</sup> In my opinion, a terroristic attack should be subjected to the same analysis for Article 17 purposes as any other tortious act. Such an attack is one of the risks of modern air travel, and the airlines would be liable should the attack occur "in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking."

## APPENDIX C

# United States Court of Appeals For the First Circuit

No. 76-1146

JULIO JOSE MARTINEZ HERNANDEZ, ET AL.,  
PLAINTIFFS, APPELLANTS,

v.

AIR FRANCE,  
DEFENDANT, APPELLEE.

## JUDGMENT

Entered November 19, 1976

This cause came on to be heard on appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, and was argued by counsel.

Upon consideration whereof, It is now here ordered, adjudged and decreed as follows: *The judgment of the district court is affirmed. No costs.*

By the Court:

/s/ DANA H. GALLUP  
Clerk.

[cc: MESSRS. FELDSTEIN AND JUNKERMAN.]

## APPENDIX D

## WARSAW CONVENTION

49 Stat. 3000 TS 876

CONVENTION FOR UNIFICATION OF CERTAIN  
RULES RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION BY AIR

The President of the German Reich, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the President of the United States of Brazil, His Majesty the King of the Bulgarians, the President of the Nationalist Government of China, His Majesty the King of Denmark and Iceland, His Majesty the King of Egypt, His Majesty the King of Spain, the Chief of State of the Republic of Estonia, the President of the Republic of Finland, the President of the French Republic, His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, the President of the Hellenic Republic, His Most Serene Highness the Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary, His Majesty the King of Italy, His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the President of the Republic of Latvia, Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, the President of the United Mexican States, His Majesty the King of Norway, Her Majesty the Queen of the Netherlands, the President of the Republic of Poland, His Majesty the King of Rumania, His Majesty the King of Sweden, the Swiss Federal Council, the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the President of the United States of Venezuela, His Majesty the King of Yugoslavia:

Having recognized the advantage of regulating in a uniform manner the conditions of international transporta-



tion by air in respect of the documents used for such transportation and of the liability of the carrier.

Have nominated to this end their respective Plenipotentiaries, who, being thereto duly authorized, have concluded and signed the following convention:

• • •

### CHAPTER III. LIABILITY OF CARRIER

#### *Article 17*

The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger, if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking.

#### *Article 18*

(1) The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the destruction or loss of, or of damage to, any checked baggage or any goods, if the occurrence which caused the damage so sustained took place during the transportation by air.

(2) The transportation by air within the meaning of the preceding paragraph shall comprise the period during which the baggage or goods are in charge of the carrier, whether in an airport or on board an aircraft, or, in the case of a landing outside an airport, in any place whatsoever.

(3) The period of the transportation by air shall not extend to any transportation by land, by sea, or by river performed outside an airport. If, however, such transportation takes place in the performance of a contract for transportation by air, for the purpose of loading, delivery or transshipment, any damage is presumed to proof to the contrary, to have been the result of an event which took place during the transportation by air.

#### *Article 19*

The carrier shall be liable for damage occasioned by delay in the transportation by air of passengers, baggage, or goods.

#### *Article 20*

(1) The carrier shall not be liable if he proves that he and his agents have taken all necessary measures to avoid the damage or that it was impossible for him or them to take such measures.

(2) In the transportation of goods and baggage the carrier shall not be liable if he proves that the damage was occasioned by an error in piloting, in the handling of the aircraft, or in navigation and that, in all other respects, he and his agents have taken all necessary measures to avoid the damage.

#### *Article 21*

If the carrier proves that the damage was caused by or contributed to by the negligence of the injured person the court may, in accordance with the provisions of its own law, exonerate the carrier wholly or partly from his liability.

#### *Article 22*

(1) In the transportation of passengers the liability of the carrier for each passenger shall be limited to the sum of 125,000 francs. Where, in accordance with the law of the court to which the case is submitted, damages may be awarded in the form of periodical payments, the equivalent capital value of the said payments shall not exceed 125,000 francs. Nevertheless, by special contract, the carrier and the passenger may agree to a higher limit of liability.

(2) In the transportation of checked baggage and of goods, the liability of the carrier shall be limited to a sum of 250 francs per kilogram, unless the consignor has made at the time when the package was handed over to the carrier, a special declaration of the value at delivery and has paid a supplementary sum if the case so requires. In that case



the carrier will be liable to pay a sum not exceeding the declared sum, unless he proves that the sum is greater than the actual value to the consignor at delivery.

(3) As regards objects of which the passenger takes charge himself the liability of the carrier shall be limited to 5,000 francs per passenger.

(4) The sums mentioned above shall be deemed to refer to the French franc consisting of 65½ milligrams of gold at the standard of fineness of nine hundred thousandths. These sums may be converted into any national currency in round figures.

#### Article 23

Any provision tending to relieve the carrier of liability or to fix a lower limit than that which is laid down in this convention shall be null and void, but the nullity of any such provision shall not involve the nullity of the whole contract, which shall remain subject to the provisions of this convention.

#### Article 24

(1) In the cases covered by articles 18 and 19 any action for damages, however founded, can only be brought subject to the conditions and limits set out in this convention.

(2) In the cases covered by article 17 the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall also apply, without prejudice to the questions as to who are the persons who have the right to bring suit and what are their respective rights.

#### Article 25

(1) The carrier shall not be entitled to avail himself of the provisions of this convention which exclude or limit his liability, if the damage is caused by his wilful misconduct or by such default on his part as, in accordance with the law of the court to which the case is submitted, is considered to be equivalent to wilful misconduct.

(2) Similarly the carrier shall not be entitled to avail himself of the said provisions, if the damage is caused

under the same circumstances by any agent of the carrier acting within the scope of his employment.

#### Article 26

(1) Receipt by the person entitled to the delivery of baggage or goods without complaint shall be *prima facie* evidence that the same have been delivered in good condition and in accordance with the document of transportation.

(2) In case of damage, the person entitled to delivery must complain to the carrier forthwith after the discovery of the damage, and at the latest, within 3 days from the date of receipt in the case of baggage and 7 days from the date of receipt in the case of goods. In case of delay the complaint must be made at the latest within 14 days from the date on which the baggage or goods have been placed at his disposal.

(3) Every complaint must be made in writing upon the document of transportation or by separate notice in writing dispatched within the times aforesaid.

(4) Failing complaint within the times aforesaid, no action shall lie against the carrier, save in the case of fraud on his part.

#### Article 27

In the case of the death of the person liable, an action for damages lies in accordance with the terms of this convention against those legally representing his estate.

#### Article 28

(1) An action for damages must be brought, at the option of the plaintiff, in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, either before the court of the domicile of the carrier or of his principal place of business, or where he has a place of business through which the contract has been made, or before the court at the place of destination.

(2) Questions of procedure shall be governed by the law of the court to which the case is submitted.

*Article 29*

(1) The right to damages shall be extinguished if an action is not brought within 2 years, reckoned from the date of arrival at the destination, or from the date on which the aircraft ought to have arrived, or from the date on which the transportation stopped.

(2) The method of calculating the period of limitation shall be determined by the law of the court to which the case is submitted.

*Article 30*

(1) In the case of transportation to be performed by various successive carriers and falling within the definition set out in the third paragraph of article 1, each carrier who accepts passengers, baggage or goods shall be subject to the rules set out in this convention, and shall be deemed to be one of the contracting parties to the contract of transportation insofar as the contract deals with that part of the transportation which is performed under his supervision.

(2) In the case of transportation of this nature, the passenger or his representative can take action only against the carrier who performed the transportation during which the accident or the delay occurred, save in the case where, by express agreement, the first carrier has assumed liability for the whole journey.

(3) As regards baggage or goods, the passenger or consignor shall have a right of action against the first carrier, and the passenger or consignee who is entitled to delivery shall have a right of action against the last carrier, and further, each may take action against the carrier who performed the transportation during which the destruction, loss, damage, or delay took place. These carriers shall be jointly and severally liable to the passenger or to the consignor or consignee.

\* \* \*

## CHAPTER V. GENERAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

*Article 32*

Any clause contained in the contract and all special agreements entered into before the damage occurred by which the parties purport to infringe the rules laid down by this convention, whether by deciding the law to be applied, or by altering the rules as to jurisdiction, shall be null and void. Nevertheless for the transportation of goods arbitration clauses shall be allowed, subject to this convention, if the arbitration is to take place within one of the jurisdictions referred to in the first paragraph of article 28.

*Article 33*

Nothing contained in this convention shall prevent the carrier either from refusing to enter into any contract of transportation or from making regulations which do not conflict with the provisions of this convention.

*Article 34*

This convention shall not apply to international transportation by air performed by way of experimental trial by air navigation enterprises with the view to the establishment of regular lines of air navigation, nor shall it apply to transportation performed in extraordinary circumstances outside the normal scope of an air carrier's business.

*Article 35*

The expression "days" when used in this convention means current days, not working days.

*Article 36*

This convention is drawn up in French in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Poland and of which one duly certified copy shall be sent by the Polish Government to the Government of each of the High Contracting Parties.



*Article 37*

(1) This convention shall be ratified. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited in the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Poland, which shall give notice of the deposit to the Government of each of the High Contracting Parties.

(2) As soon as this convention shall have been ratified by five of the High Contracting Parties it shall come into force as between them on the ninetieth day after the deposit of the fifth ratification. Thereafter it shall come into force between the High Contracting Parties which shall have ratified and the High Contracting Party which deposits its instrument of ratification on the ninetieth day after the deposit.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Government of the Republic of Poland to notify the Government of each of the High Contracting Parties of the date on which this convention comes into force as well as the date of the deposit of each ratification.

*Article 38*

(1) This convention shall, after it has come into force, remain open for adherence by any state.

(2) The adherence shall be effected by a notification addressed to the Government of the Republic of Poland, which shall inform the Government of each of the High Contracting Parties thereof.

(3) The adherence shall take effect as from the ninetieth day after the notification made to the Government of the Republic of Poland.

*Article 39*

(1) Any one of the High Contracting Parties may denounce this convention by a notification addressed to the Government of the Republic of Poland, which shall at once inform the Government of each of the High Contracting Parties.

(2) Denunciation shall take effect six months after the notification of denunciation, and shall operate only as regards the party which shall have proceeded to denunciation.

*Article 40*

(1) Any High Contracting Party, may at the time of signature or of deposit of ratification or of adherence, declare that the acceptance which it gives to this convention does not apply to all or any of its colonies, protectorates, territories under mandate, or any other territory subject to its sovereignty or its authority, or any other territory under its suzerainty.

(2) Accordingly any High Contracting Party may subsequently adhere separately in the name of all or any of its colonies, protectorates, territories under mandate, or any other territory subject to its sovereignty or to its authority or any other territory under its suzerainty which have been thus excluded by its original declaration.

(3) Any High Contracting Party may denounce this convention, in accordance with its provisions, separately or for all or any of its colonies, protectorates, territories under mandate, or any other territory subject to its sovereignty or to its authority, or any other territory under its sovereignty.

*Article 41*

Any High Contracting Party shall be entitled not earlier than two years after the coming into force of this convention to call for the assembling of a new international conference in order to consider any improvements which may be made in this convention. To this end it will communicate with the Government of the French Republic which will take the necessary measures to make preparations for such conference.

This convention, done at Warsaw on October 12, 1929, shall remain open for signature until January 31, 1930.



**APPENDIX E****"AGREEMENT**

"The undersigned carriers (hereinafter referred to as 'the Carriers') hereby agree as follows:

"1. Each of the Carriers shall, effective May 16, 1966, include the following in its conditions of carriage, including tariffs embodying conditions of carriage filed by it with any government.

"[insert tariff]

"2. Each Carrier shall, at the time of delivery of the ticket, furnish to each passenger whose transportation is governed by the Convention, or the Convention as amended by the Hague Protocol, and by the special contract described in paragraph 1, the following notice, which shall be printed in type at least as large as 10 point modern type and in ink contrasting with the stock on (i) each ticket; (ii) the piece of paper either placed in the ticket envelope with the ticket or attached to the ticket; or (iii) on the ticket envelope:

"[insert Notice]

"3. This Agreement shall be filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board of the United States for approval pursuant to Section 412 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended and filed with other governments required. The agreement shall become effective upon approval by said Board pursuant to said Section 412.

"4. This Agreement may be signed in any number of counterparts, all of which shall constitute one Agreement. Any carrier may become a party to this Agreement by signing a counterpart hereof and depositing it with said Civil Aeronautics Board.

"5. Any carrier party hereto may withdraw from this Agreement by giving twelve (12) months' written notice

of withdrawal to said Civil Aeronautics Board and the other Carriers parties to the Agreement."

**"TARIFF**

"The Carrier shall avail itself of the limitation of liability provided in the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air signed at Warsaw October 12, 1929, or provided in the said Convention as amended by the Protocol signed at The Hague September 28, 1955. However, in accordance with Article 22(1) of said Convention, or said Convention as amended by said Protocol, the Carrier agrees that, as to all international transportation by the Carrier as defined in the said Convention or said Convention as amended by said Protocol which, according to the Contract of Carriage, includes a point in the United States of America as a point of origin, point of destination, or agreed stopping place.

"(1) The limit of liability for each passenger for death, wounding or other bodily injury shall be the sum of U.S. \$75,000 inclusive of legal fees and costs, except that, in case of a claim brought in a State where provisions is made for separate award of legal fees and costs, the limit shall be the sum of U.S. \$58,000 exclusive of legal fees and costs.

"(2) The carrier shall not, with respect to any claim arising out of the death, wounding, or other bodily injury of a passenger, avail itself of any defense under Article 20(1) of said Convention or said Convention as amended by said Protocol.

"Nothing herein shall be deemed to affect the rights and liabilities of the carrier with regard to any claim brought by, on behalf of, or in respect of any person who has wilfully caused damage which resulted in death, wounding, or other bodily injury of a passenger."

### “ADVICE TO INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS ON LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

“Passengers on a journey involving an ultimate destination or a stop in a country other than the country of origin are advised that the provisions of a treaty known as the Warsaw Convention may be applicable to the entire journey, including any portion entirely within the country of origin or destination. For such passengers on a journey to, from, or with an agreed stopping place in the United States of America, the Convention and special contracts of carriage embodied in applicable tariffs provide that liability of [certain carriers (name of carrier) and certain other carriers] parties to such special contracts for death of or personal injury to passengers is limited in most cases to proven damages not to exceed U.S. \$75,000 per passenger, and that this liability up to such limit shall not depend on negligence on the part of the carrier. For such passengers traveling by a carrier not a party to such special contracts or on a journey not to, from, or having an agreed stopping place in the United States of America, liability of the carrier for death or personal injury to passengers is limited in most to approximately U.S. \$8,290 or U.S. \$16,580.

“The names of Carriers parties to such special contracts are available at all ticket offices of such carriers and may be examined on request.

“Additional protection can usually be obtained by purchasing insurance from a private company. Such insurance is not affected by any limitation of the carrier’s liability under the Warsaw Convention or such special contracts of carriage. For further information please consult your airline or insurance company representative.”

### “LIABILITY LIMITATIONS OF WARSAW CONVENTION AND HAGUE PROTOCOL

#### “Order Approving Agreement

“Adopted by the Civil Aeronautics Board at its office in Washington, D.C., on the 13th day of May, 1966.

“The Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Transportation by Air, generally known as the Warsaw Convention, creates a uniform body of law with respect to the rights and responsibilities of passengers, shippers, and air carriers in international air transportation. The United States became a party to the Convention in 1934, and eventually over 90 countries likewise became parties to the Convention. On November 15, 1965, the U.S. Government gave notice of denunciation of the Convention, emphasizing that such action was solely because of the Convention’s low limits of liability for personal injury or death to passengers. Pursuant to Article 39 of the Convention this notice would become effective upon 6 months’ notice, in this case, May 15, 1966. Subsequently, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) made efforts to effect an arrangement among air carriers, foreign air carriers, and other carriers (including carriers not members of IATA) providing the major portions of international air carriage to and from the United States to increase the limitations of liability now applicable to claims for personal injury and death under the Convention and the Protocol. The purpose of such action is to provide a basis upon which the United States could withdraw its notice of denunciation.

“The arrangement proposed has been embodied in an agreement (Agreement CAB 18900) between various air carriers, foreign air carriers, and other carriers which has been filed with the Board pursuant to Section 412(a) of



the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 and Part 261 of the Board's economic regulations and assigned the above-designated CAB number.

"By this agreement, the parties thereto bind themselves to include in their tariffs, effective May 16, 1966, a special contract in accordance with Article 22(1) of the Convention or the Protocol providing for a limit of liability for each passenger for death, wounding, or other bodily injury of \$75,000 inclusive of legal fees, and, in case of a claim brought in a State where provision is made for separate award of legal fees and costs, a limit of \$58,000 exclusive of legal fees and costs. These limitations shall be applicable to international transportation by the carrier as defined in the Convention or Protocol which includes a point in the United States as a point of origin, point of destination, or agreed stopping place. The parties further agree to provide in their tariffs that the Carrier shall not, with respect to any claim arising out of death, wounding, or other bodily injury of a passenger, avail itself of any defense under Article 20(1) of the Convention or the Convention as amended by the Protocol. The tariff provisions would stipulate, however, that nothing therein shall be deemed to affect the rights and liabilities of the Carrier with regard to any claim brought by, on behalf of, or in respect of any person who has willfully caused damage which results in death, wounding, or other bodily injury of a passenger.

"The carriers by the agreement further stipulate that they will, at time of delivery of the tickets, furnish to each passenger governed by the Convention or the Protocol and by the special contract described above, a notice in 10 point type advising international passengers of the limitations of liability established by the Convention or the Protocol, or the higher liability agreed to by the special contracts pursuant to the Convention or Protocol as described above.

The agreement is to become effective upon approval by this Board, and any carrier may become a party to it by signing a counterpart thereof and depositing it with the Board. Withdrawal from the agreement may be effected by giving 12 months' written notice to the Board and the other Carrier parties thereto.

"As indicated, the decision of the U.S. Government to serve notice to denounce the Convention was predicated upon the low liability limits therein for personal injury and death. The Government announced, however, that it would be prepared to withdraw the Notice of Denunciation if, prior to its effective date, there is a reasonable prospect for international agreement on limits of liability for international transportation in the area of \$100,000 per passenger or on uniform rules without any limit of liability, and if pending such international agreement there is a provisional arrangement among the principal international air carriers providing for liability up to \$75,000 per passenger.

"Steps have been taken by the signing carriers to have tariffs become effective May 16, 1966, upon approval of this agreement, which will increase by special contract their liability for personal injury or death as described herein. The signatory carriers provide by far the greater portion of international transportation to, from, and within the United States. The agreement will result in a salutary increase in the protection given to passengers from the increased liability amounts and the waiver of defenses under Article 20(1) of the Convention or Protocol. The U.S. Government has concluded that such arrangements warrant withdrawal of the Notice of Denunciation of the Warsaw Convention. Implementation of the agreement will permit continued adherence to the Convention with the benefits to be derived therefrom, but without the imposition of the low liability limits therein contained upon most international travel in-



volving travel to or from the United States. The stipulation that no tariff provision shall be deemed to affect the rights and liabilities of the carrier with regard to any claim brought by, on behalf of, or in respect of any person who has willfully caused damage which results in death, wounding or other bodily injury of a passenger operates to diminish any incentive for sabotage.

"Upon consideration of the agreement, and of matters relating thereto of which the Board takes notice, the Board does not find that the agreement is adverse to the public interest or in violation of the Act and it will be approved.

"Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, and particularly sections 102, 204(a), and 412 thereof:

"*It is ordered*, That: 1. Agreement CAB 18900 is approved.

"This order will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

"By the Civil Aeronautics Board.

"[SEAL]

HAROLD R. SANDERSON,  
*Secretary.*"

## APPENDIX F

# United States Court of Appeals For the Third Circuit

No. 75-1990

CONSTANTINE EVANGELINOS, CALLIOPPI  
EVANGELINOS, ERMA EVANGELINOS, STELLA  
EVANGELINOS and MARY JULIA EVANGELINOS,

APPELLANTS

v.

TRANS WORLD AIRLINES, INCORPORATED  
(D. C. Civil No. 74-165)

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Argued February 3, 1976  
Before SEITZ, *Chief Judge*, and VAN DUSEN  
and WEIS, *Circuit Judges*

Donald L. Very, Esq., Tucker, Arensberg & Ferguson, Pittsburgh, Pa., Attorneys for Appellants

Michael L. Magulick, Esq. & Robert E. Wayman, Esq., Wayman, Irvin, Trushel & McAuley, Pittsburgh, Pa., Attorneys for Appellee.

Of Counsel: John N. Romans, Esq., P. G. Pennoyer, Jr., Esq., Charles K. O'Neill, Esq. & Hilton H. Strothers, Jr., Esq., Chadbourne, Parke, Whiteside & Wolff, New York City, N. Y.

OPINION OF THE COURT  
(Filed May 1, 1976)

VAN DUSEN, *Circuit Judge*.

On August 5, 1973, the Transit Lounge of the Hellinkon Airport in Athens, Greece, was the scene of a vicious ter-

rorist attack on the passengers of TWA's New York bound Flight 881. The principal question presented by this interlocutory appeal<sup>1</sup> concerns the liability of Trans World Airlines under the terms of the Warsaw Convention, 49 Stat. 3000, *et seq.* (1934), as modified by the Montreal Agreement of 1966, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966).<sup>2</sup> The district court concluded that the terms of the Convention were not applicable to the plaintiffs at the time of the terrorist attack and accordingly granted TWA's motion for partial summary judgment, dismissing the claim under the Warsaw Convention.<sup>3</sup> *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines*, 396 F. Supp. 95 (W. D. Pa. 1975). We reserve and remand.

The facts of the attack on which this litigation is based have been exhaustively summarized elsewhere<sup>4</sup> and need not be repeated here. It is enough to state briefly that, at the time of the terrorist attack, plaintiffs had already completed all the steps necessary to boarding the aircraft except (1) undergoing physical and handbag searches,<sup>5</sup> and (2) physically proceeding from the search area to the aircraft some 250 meters away. Immediately after Flight 881

<sup>1</sup> By amended order dated June 26, 1975, the district court certified this appeal pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1292(b) (232-33a). On July 21, 1975, we granted plaintiff-appellants' petition for permission to appeal. Jurisdiction is based on 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1332. Plaintiffs are citizens of Ohio. Defendant is incorporated in the State of Delaware and has its principal place of business in New York.

<sup>2</sup> Both the Convention, a treaty officially entitled "A Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Transportation by Air," and the Montreal Agreement are reprinted at 49 U.S.C. § 1502 note (1970).

<sup>3</sup> The complaint alleged both absolute liability under the Warsaw Convention, as modified, and negligence.

<sup>4</sup> *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra* at 96-98, and *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *petition for cert.* filed, 44 U.S.L.W. 3546 (U.S., Mar. 30, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> These searches were required and conducted by the Greek Government and were prerequisites of being permitted to leave the airport by plane. TWA had two guards stationed inside the terminal building immediately beyond the search procedure area.

was announced over the Transit Lounge loudspeaker, the passengers were instructed to form two lines in front of Departure Gate 4. And, while all but a handful were standing in those lines awaiting the search procedure,<sup>6</sup> two Palestinian terrorists fired bursts of automatic weapons fire in the general direction of the TWA queues and hurled hand grenades, which exploded in the vicinity.

Under the terms of the Warsaw Convention, as modified, TWA is absolutely liable to a limit of \$75,000. per pas-

<sup>6</sup> The district court stated that:

"... entrance to [the Transit Lounge] is restricted to passengers ticketed and scheduled to depart on international flights of the ... carriers operating out of the terminal and to other personnel, who are not passengers, needed to service the area. ... At ... Gate [4], there are two separate lines, one for males and one for females, where there is a handbag search and a physical search made by the Greek Police. There are tables for examination of hand luggage and behind the tables were located two booths for physical search of all persons intending to depart. After the search, passengers would proceed through double doors out of the Transit Lounge where they boarded buses for transportation to the aircraft stationed at some distance from Gate 4.

"... Two TWA Security Guards were stationed at Gate 4 as well as at least two passenger service personnel of TWA. After being physically searched, the passengers would have walked to two sets of exit doors which led from the Transit Lounge to a raised terrace attached to the terminal building. Two sets of stairs were located on the east side of the terrace leading to a waiting area where there was a bus ... intended to carry persons across the traffic apron a distance of approximately 250 meters to where the airplanes were parked for loading.

"At the time of the attack, all eighty-nine passengers scheduled to board TWA Flight 881 had checked in and received their boarding passes. The Plaintiffs had completed the various step required and began to queue up in two lines preparatory to proceeding through the hand baggage and physical searches. ...

"Approximately seven Flight 881 passengers had departed through Gate 4, exited the Transit Lounge, and had either boarded or were about to board the bus previously referred to. The great majority of the eighty-nine scheduled passengers for Flight 881 were in line in front of the tables at Gate 4 at the time of the incident. The Plaintiffs were injured while being queued up in line in front of Gate 4 while waiting to be searched."

Pages 97-98 of 396 F. Supp. (footnotes omitted).



senger if an incident which causes passenger injury falls within the ambit of Article 17 of the Convention.<sup>7</sup> Article 17 provides:

"The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking." (Emphasis added.)

TWA does not dispute the district court's conclusion that a terrorist attack on airline passengers is an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17. Thus the central question is whether the terrorist attack took place "in the course of any of the operations of embarking . . . ."

Our task has been significantly facilitated by the Second Circuit's recent decision in *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *petition for cert. filed*, 44 U.S. L. W. 3546 (U.S., Mar. 30, 1976), an identical case arising

<sup>7</sup> As originally conceived and drafted, the Convention effected a bargain in which airline passengers traded a monetary limitation on damages—the equivalent of \$8,300. per passenger—for the establishment of a rebuttable presumption of liability on the part of the carrier for "accidents" falling within the ambit of the Convention. Warsaw Convention, Chap. III. American dissatisfaction with this bargain, especially the limits on damages, ultimately led to the Montreal Agreement, a voluntary agreement between air carriers governing international transportation that involved a United States location. Pursuant to the Agreement each participating airline filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a contract under which the damages limit was raised to \$75,000. and the various carriers agreed not to assert any of the affirmative defenses provided in Article 20 of the Convention. The effect was contractual creation of a new regime of absolute liability for damage arising from incidents falling within the Convention. For excellent discussions of the background of the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement, see *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323 (5th Cir. 1967), *cert. denied*, 392 U.S. 905 (1968); Lowenfeld & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967).

out of the same incident. See also *Leppo v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, — Misc. 2d — (N.Y. Sup. Ct. No. 21770-1973, Trial Term Part 62, Decision of Mar. 10, 1976, N. Y. County). In the *Day* case, Chief Judge Kaufman, in a thorough and scholarly opinion, carefully analyzed the history and purposes of the Warsaw Convention, as modified. Emphasizing the American experience under the Convention, the current expectation of air carriers governed by the Convention as modified, and the considerations militating in favor of liability in this case, the *Day* court unanimously concluded that the activities of the TWA passengers in this case fell within the purview of the phrase "the operations of embarking." We agree with the result reached in *Day* and note that there is a substantial interest in uniformity of decision in this area. *Cf. Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323, 337 (5th Cir. 1967), *cert. denied*, 392 U.S. 905 (1968).

Giving the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of embarking" a common sense construction, we agree at the outset with the plaintiffs' contention that we must examine the nature of the activity in which plaintiffs were engaged to determine if that activity can fairly be considered part of "the operations of embarking." Nothing in the Convention defines the term "operations of embarking" or otherwise delimits the period of liability prior to actual boarding. Nevertheless, for substantially the same reasons expressed in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, supra*, 528 F.2d at 33-34, we believe it is appropriate under all the facts and circumstances of this case to view the activity of undergoing pre-boarding searches as part of the "operations of embarking."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Among the relevant factors are activity, control and location. We emphasize the activity in which plaintiffs were involved, the control by defendant of the plaintiffs at the time of the accident, and the relation of the terrorist attack causing the accident to air travel.



The undisputed facts reveal that, at the time of the attack, the plaintiffs had completed virtually all the activities required as a prerequisite to boarding and were standing in line at the departure gate ready to proceed to the aircraft. The plaintiffs' injuries were sustained while they were acting at the explicit direction of TWA and while they were performing the final act required as a prerequisite to boarding busses employed by TWA to take the Evangelinos family to the aircraft. More significantly, at the time these operations had commenced, Flight 881 had already been called for final boarding. As a result, TWA passengers were no longer mingling over a broad area with passengers of other airlines. Instead, acting pursuant to instructions, they were congregated in a specific geographical area designated by TWA and were identifiable as a group associated with TWA's Flight 881.

By announcing the flight, forming the group and directing the passengers as a group to stand near the departure gate, TWA had assumed control over the group. This conclusion is supported by the fact that TWA service personnel were standing at Gate 4, guiding the passengers, and TWA security personnel were present. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to conclude that TWA had begun to perform its obligation as air carrier under the contract of carriage and that TWA, by announcing the flight and taking control of the passengers as a group, had assumed responsibility for the plaintiffs' protection. Thus, for all practical purposes, "the operations of embarking" had begun.

Neither *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), nor the French case of *Maché v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd* Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970) (reprinted in translation as Exhibit B to appellee's brief), is inconsistent with the conclusion that "the operations of embarking" had commenced at the time of the accident in

this case. First, both cases involved disembarking, where the nature and extent of the carrier's control over the passenger and the type of activity in which plaintiff was engaged differed significantly from the case at bar.<sup>9</sup> Further, both the *MacDonald* and *Maché* courts considered the Convention's original goal of developing rules to govern the risks then thought to be inherent in air carriage and concluded, on that basis, that the Convention did not apply because the plaintiffs had reached "safe" points, distant from such risks. *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, *supra* at 1405; *Maché v. Air France*, *supra*. See also, Sullivan, The Codification of Air Carrier Liability by International Convention, 7 Journal of Air Law 1, 20 (1936). Since the danger of violence — whether in the form of terrorism, hijacking or sabotage — is today so closely associated with air transportation, we have little difficulty in concluding that the plaintiffs in this case were not located in a "safe place," far removed from risks now inherent in air transportation. We note that another terrorist attack on airline passengers recently occurred in Israel. See *In re Tel Aviv*, *supra* at note 9. To conclude otherwise would be to freeze the Warsaw Convention in its 1929 mold, when air travel was in its infancy, and to ignore current air travel procedures and the special risks created by the type of violence that resulted in this tragedy.

<sup>9</sup> See also *In Re Tel Aviv* (D.P.R. Dec. 9, 1975) (Nos. 518-72 et al.). In *MacDonald*, the plaintiff was injured while she was waiting for her baggage in the baggage claim area of Boston International Airport. She was in no sense under the control of the airline or acting as a part of a group under direct airline supervision. In *Maché*, the plaintiff was injured while walking from the aircraft. He was following an Air France stewardess and it is not completely clear whether his route varied from hers, since the manhole cover did not "rock" causing her to fall. Also we note that the plaintiff in *Maché* was arguing against the applicability of the Warsaw Convention and that the court in *MacDonald* held that the plaintiff's injuries in that case were not caused by an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17.

Nor are we convinced by TWA's principal argument that "the operations of embarking" can never occur within the physical confines of an air terminal building and that the Warsaw Convention is, therefore, inapplicable. Starting, as we must, with the actual language used in Article 17, we are struck by the fact that nothing in Article 17 suggests a limitation on the period of liability based strictly on the location of the "operations of embarking or disembarking." To the contrary, the contrast between the phrase "while on board the aircraft" and the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of embarking . . ." indicates that the draftsmen of Article 17 made a conscious choice to go beyond a mere location test. Further, adoption of the strict location test advanced by TWA could lead to differing results resting solely on the fortuity of where passengers are placed at the time of injury. In the absence of plain language compelling such a conclusion, we reject it.

Recognizing that nothing on the face of Article 17 supports their argument, TWA directs our attention to the treaty making history of that Article. The pertinent history consists of debates centered around Article 20 of the draft Convention prepared by a small committee of experts, *Comite Internationale Technique d'Experts Juridique Aeriens* (CITEJA), for consideration at Warsaw. Article 20 of the CITEJA draft provided in part:

"The period of carriage, for the application of the provisions of the present chapter [Liability of the Carrier] shall extend from the moment when the travellers . . . enter the aerodrome of departure, up to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination . . ."

When the draft Article 20 came up for consideration, it provoked considerable debate between those who endorsed the expansive aerodrome-to-aerodrome period of liability and those who espoused a more restrictive view. Minutes,

Second International Conference on Private Aeronautical Law, October 4-12, 1929, Warsaw, 67-84 (R. Horner & D. Legrez transl. 1975) (hereinafter Minutes). Ultimately the principal of aerodrome-to-aerodrome liability was put to a vote and defeated. Minutes at 82-83. The problem of drafting a new article in conformity with the vote was then referred to a drafting committee and Article 17 in its present form emerged.

TWA contends that the rejection of the CITEJA draft demonstrates that the delegates intended to exclude from the period of liability the time during which passengers are inside air terminal buildings. We disagree. While the rejection of the CITEJA draft indisputably reflected an intent to restrict the expansive period of liability envisioned by Article 20, nothing in the debates indicates that the line was finally and unalterably drawn at the walls of airline terminal buildings.<sup>10</sup> Surely if such an explicit line had been drawn, the language of Article 17 would now reflect it. Moreover, the debates indicate confusion among the delegates themselves as to the meaning of the rejection of the CITEJA draft. Minutes at 83-84.<sup>11</sup> We are, therefore, especially reluctant to draw conclusions which are

<sup>10</sup> In 1929, the word "aerodrome" meant the entire airfield property on which there were several buildings used by passengers, as opposed to the single, large, air terminal building characteristic of major airports in this country today.

<sup>11</sup> We do not find the debates as clear as the dissent indicates. Although the delegates agreed that "rejection of [Draft Article 20] led to acceptance of the opposite principle," it is unclear as to what that "opposite principle" was. In *Day, supra*, the Second Circuit concluded that the Convention had adopted the views of Prof. Georges Ripert of France—the "dean of French writers on civil law"—who "proposed that the article be recast in terms broad enough to allow the courts to take into account the facts of each case." 528 F.2d at 34-35. In any event, it is clear from the final language of Article 17 that the strict Brazilian proposal, as articulated by the delegate from Great Britain, which would have limited the period of liability to the time when passengers were "on board the aircraft," was not adopted.



not reflected in the work of a drafting committee that had the advantage of considering the debates contemporaneously.

The most that can be said is that the draftsmen rejected the concept of automatic liability (subject, of course, to the defenses provided elsewhere in the Convention) for all accidents within the limits of the aerodrome. Our conclusion that under certain circumstances there may be liability for some accidents within a terminal building is not inconsistent with that intent. Furthermore, by analyzing this case, as we have, in light of the carrier's control over the passengers and the likelihood of injury by causes inherent in air transportation, we have accommodated the concerns of those who opposed the CITEJA draft without doing violence to the language of Article 17.<sup>12</sup> Cf. Shawcross & Beaumont, *Air Law*, at 441-42 (3d ed. 1966); Matte, *Traite de Droit Aerien Aeronautique*, at 404-05 (1964); Sullivan, *supra*.

Accordingly, the June 26, 1975, judgment of the district court will be reversed and the case remanded for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

TO THE CLERK:

Please file the foregoing opinion.

*Circuit Judge*

<sup>12</sup> The debates indicate that the principal fear was that carriers would be liable for injuries sustained by passengers at times when the airline had no control over what the passengers were doing. As Prof. Georges Ripert of France stated:

"There is real difficulty only for travellers, and this difficulty arises from the fact that the traveller has his independence . . . ." Minutes at 73.

Virtually all delegates agreed that there should be liability while the passengers were on board the aircraft—a period when the carrier had complete control over both the passengers and their environment.

SEITZ, *Chief Judge*, dissenting.

The majority holds that the defendant airline is strictly liable under Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention for the injuries which plaintiffs sustained within an airport terminal while waiting to board their flight, since those injuries occurred "in the course of . . . the operations of embarking." I believe the majority's interpretation of Article 17 is unsupported by the relevant history of the treaty and with the exception of the Second Circuit's recent decision in *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *petition for cert. filed*, 44 U.S.L.W. 3546 (U.S. March 30, 1976), is contrary to the decisions of courts in several signatory countries.

In an attempt to define the scope of the rather imprecise language of Article 17, the majority rejects the "location test" advanced by TWA and adopts instead an "activity test" under which a passenger's activities are regarded as largely determinative of whether that passenger was engaged in the operations of embarking. The majority reasons that the "location test" could lead to inconsistent results based solely on the fortuity of where the injured passenger was stationed at the time of injury. I believe that both location and activity must be examined in order to determine whether a passenger's injuries were sustained during embarkation.

The starting point of my analysis is the policy underlying the enactment of the Warsaw Convention. As originally adopted, the Convention was designed to shield the infant airline industry from potentially crippling damage awards for injuries caused by risks inherent in air transportation. In order to accomplish this objective, the treaty restricted an airline's potential liability to approximately \$8,300, in exchange for a presumption that the airline was liable if the accident took place on board the aircraft or during embarkation.



Plaintiffs maintain that the signing of the Montreal Agreement in 1966 marked the rejection of the Convention's original goal and that the Convention, as modified by the Montreal Agreement, is now intended to afford protection solely to the passenger. While it is true that the Montreal Agreement increased the damage limitation to \$75,000 and established a system of liability without fault,<sup>1</sup> the Agreement retained in toto the other provisions of the Convention, including Article 17. Thus, while the potential recovery of those previously covered by the Convention was significantly increased, the class of passengers entitled to the treaty's protection and the types of accidents on which liability could be based remained the same. I therefore believe that the Convention's original policy of limiting an airline's liability for personal injuries caused by the unique perils of air navigation retains its vitality, notwithstanding the adoption of the Montreal Agreement. While I am not unmindful of the strong interest in providing injured passengers with an adequate recovery, where their injuries are otherwise within the coverage of the Convention, I believe this goal has been accomplished through the increase of damage limitations and the elimination of the airline's "due care" defense.

<sup>1</sup> It is significant to note that the United States was initially opposed to the principle of absolute liability since it viewed the fault requirement as a necessary protection for the growth of the airline industry. The subsequent retreat from this position occurred when the \$100,000 liability limit which the United States advocated was rejected by the other signatories to the treaty. Following the defeat of this proposal, the effective denunciation of the treaty by the United States appeared imminent. The inclusion of a system of liability without fault which was designed to reduce litigation and to provide quicker settlements was therefore suggested as a compromise measure in order to ensure United States acceptance of the lower liability limits. Lowenfeld & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967).

The historical concern of the Convention drafters and delegates was with the unusual and grave risks which were then inherent in air travel. With this principle in mind, it is apparent that a passenger's location has a significant impact on the risks to which he is exposed. The farther a passenger is removed from the immediate vicinity of the airplane itself, the less likely it is that he will be injured by any of the unique perils which accompany air travel.

Certain dangers, such as the danger of skyjacking, are encountered once the passenger has boarded the aircraft. Obviously, the threat of skyjacking is not a substantial risk borne by passengers within the terminal. Hence, while skyjacking has been loosely labeled as a risk associated with air travel, *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co.*, 351 F. Supp. 702 (S.D.N.Y. 1972), *aff'd* 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973), it is evident that such activity creates a risk only to those so situated as to be exposed to the danger.

Like skyjacking, sabotage or terrorist activity may pose a threat to passengers boarding or on board an aircraft. To this extent, I agree that terrorism is a risk which accompanies international air travel. I am unable to agree, however, that this particular hazard is an incidental risk of air travel when it occurs within the confines of an airport terminal. Rather, in my view, a terrorist attack inside an airport is no more likely than the bombing of a restaurant, bank or other public place. Accordingly, I believe the majority's conclusion that plaintiffs were injured as a result of a risk inherent in modern air travel is unwarranted. The particular hazards of terrorism which are unique to air navigation are simply not risks to which passengers in plaintiffs' proximity were exposed.

The importance of a passenger's location as it relates to the risks of air travel is underscored by the case law of this country as well as that of other signatories to the

treaty.<sup>2</sup> In the French case of *Maché v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd* Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970), the highest court in France determined that the Warsaw Convention only governs accidents arising on the ground at locations of the airport where passengers are exposed to aviation risks. In that case a disembarking passenger was led by 2 flight attendants across the traffic apron toward the terminal building. Due to construction work, a detour was taken through a customs area which was not on the traffic apron. The passenger accidentally stepped in a man-hole and was injured. In finding that the Warsaw Convention was inapplicable and did not restrict the passenger's potential recovery, the court ruled that the customs area in which plaintiff was injured was not an area exposed to risks of air navigation. Significantly, the court found that the only ground area where such risks were incurred was the traffic apron.

A case decided by the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), also stresses the importance of a passenger's location in relation to the hazards of air travel. That case involved a 74 year old woman who mysteriously fell while awaiting her suitcases in the baggage area of an airport. The court affirmed a directed verdict in the defendant airline's favor on the ground that there was

<sup>2</sup> As the majority correctly notes, there is a substantial interest in uniformity of decision in this area. *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323 (5th Cir. 1967), *cert. denied*, 392 U.S. 905 (1968). I do not, believe, however, that the interest in uniform international interpretation of the treaty, adverted to in *Block*, compels us to follow the Second Circuit's decision in *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, *supra*, since that decision is inconsistent with prior decisions of United States courts and, more importantly, with a decision of the highest court in France. If deference is due in order to achieve international uniformity, I believe we should respect the French interpretation of a treaty which was written and negotiated in the French language.

no basis for finding an "accident", the first requirement for invocation of the Convention. In any event, however, the court found that the injuries sustained by plaintiff did not occur during the operation of disembarking since that operation had "terminated by the time the passenger [had] descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means [were] supplied and [had] reached a safe point inside of the terminal . . ." 439 F.2d at 1045. The court reasoned that the Warsaw Convention was not intended to apply "to accidents which are far removed from the operation of aircraft." *Id.* at 1405.

A determination as to whether a passenger's injuries were sustained in an area exposed to the particular risks of air navigation is thus a necessary first step in deciding whether that passenger was injured during the course of the operations of embarking. Since I believe this threshold determination must be resolved against plaintiffs in this case, I would affirm the judgment of the district court. However, even assuming plaintiffs were injured at a location where the perils of air travel are logically encountered, I do not believe they were injured while in the course of the operations of embarking as required by Article 17. Rather, my reading of the Convention Minutes and the subsequent commentary on the treaty indicates that the delegates viewed the operations of embarking restrictively to include only the actual boarding of the airplane or, at best, the trip across the traffic apron from the terminal building to the plane. Under no circumstances were accidents inside the airport terminal regarded as within the scope of the treaty.

As the majority correctly observes, the present language of Article 17 resulted from the delegates' rejection of Article 20 of the CITEJA draft which would have imposed liability from the time of entry of the "aerodrome of departure" until the time of exit from the "aerodrome of arrival." During the debates on Article 20, several



amendments were proposed to distinguish between the liability for carriage of passengers and that for transportation of goods. A representative example is the proposal by the delegate from Brazil which suggested that the language of Article 20 be amended:

“to replace ‘from the moment when travelers, goods and baggage enter the aerodrome of departure up to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination’ by ‘from the moment when the travelers have boarded and the goods or baggage have been delivered to the forwarder’.”

Minutes at 71.

The French Delegation would have amended Article 20 to limit the airlines liability for injuries to travelers to those injuries sustained during the course of carriage. During the discussions which followed the various proposals, it became evident that there was considerable dissatisfaction among the delegates with the expansive provision for passenger liability embodied in Article 20 and a widespread feeling that the Article should be re-submitted to the Drafting Committee for revision.

Believing that important questions of substance rather than mere matters of re-wording were raised by the several proposed amendments, the delegate from Great Britain suggested that the Convention pass on the substantive issues before referring Article 20 to the Drafting Committee. He remarked as follows:

“It seems to me that here there are questions of principal upon which one can pass before the referral to the drafting committee.

“For example, as regards travelers, does liability begin, as it is said in the draft, upon the entrance into the aerodrome of departure, or does it begin when the traveler is on board the aircraft? Here is the divergence as it exists as regards the travelers: When

must liability begin? Following the principal established in the draft of the Convention, or simply when the traveler is on board?

“It’s a question upon which I ask that one pass before the referral to the drafting committee.”

Minutes at 80-81.

These sentiments were echoed by the Reporter for the preliminary draft who stated:

“We should make a decision first of all on the carriage of travelers and then on the carriage of goods. The situation, in effect, can be different.

“In the carriage of travelers, there is a double solution possible: either maintaining the text which would consist in engaging the liability of the carrier as soon as the passenger enters the aerodrome, or accepting the suggestion which was made which consists in saying that the liability of the carrier is engaged as soon as the traveler has embarked on the aircraft.

“I point out again that this last solution, practically, is not one at all, and facilitates nothing at all, because the judge will always have to specify the moment when the liability of the carrier begins. In effect, the passenger can have stepped [sic] on the step-up of the aircraft, the step-up which is not an actual part of the aircraft, and be injured by another aircraft.

“Be that as it may, the proposal is very clear.”

Minutes at 81.

The substantive question was then called to a vote.

So that there could be no doubt as to the precise question on which the delegates were voting, the delegate from Luxembourg emphasized that

“before deciding to refer to the drafting committee, it is indispensable to vote in the sense of the proposals made by the British delegation, which discriminated

very well between the various cases. When the conference will have made a decision on these points which will be submitted to a vote, then the drafting committee will be able to work in a useful manner."

Minutes at 82.

The Brazilian Delegation likewise reiterated:

"... I draw the attention of the Assembly to that upon which we are going to vote. It's a question of saying, whether the liability of the carrier begins as soon as the traveler enters into the aerodrome, which is a public place, or when he embarks on the aircraft."

Minutes at 82.

Thereafter, a vote was taken and the proposed draft of Article 20 was defeated. Following revision, the current Article 17 emerged from the Drafting Committee and was adopted.

The majority concludes that the debates indicate confusion among the delegates as to the meaning of the rejection of the CITEJA draft. I am unable to subscribe to this position in view of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. The objections which were voiced to CITEJA draft of Article 20 and the several amendments which were proposed during the debates all reflect a common desire on the part of those opposed to the draft Article to restrict a carrier's liability for personal injuries to injuries which occurred on board or while the passenger was embarking. Agreement with respect to this limitation among the delegates who were critical of the CITEJA draft was almost universal. Naturally, certain questions were raised as to whether this alternative proposal would cover injuries sustained "in the case of the aircraft which is still in the hanger, which is on the traffic apron, which is taxiing etc. . . ." Minutes at 77. Questions were also posed as to whether the proposal would cover a passenger injured on the stairway which leads to the interior of the aircraft. Minutes at 78, 81. None of the

factual variations or hypothetical possibilities which were raised, however, even remotely suggested that the restrictive proposal might be construed to cover passengers within the terminal. To the contrary, it was in reaction to the imposition of liability under such circumstances that the proposal was conceived.

I therefore believe that in rejecting the CITEJA draft of Article 20, the delegates intended to signify their approval of a proposal which would limit an airline's liability for personal injuries to those injuries which occurred during flight or while the passenger was boarding. Their subsequent adoption of Article 17 must be viewed as an affirmance of this more restrictive concept of liability. It appears likely that the phrase "during the course of any of the operations of embarking" was inserted in order to make explicit that the Article covered the passenger who was on the stairway preparing to enter the airplane in addition to passengers who had already boarded.

If any confusion existed as to the scope of the terms "embarking" and "disembarking", it was limited to the question of whether the Convention embraced accidents which occurred while the passenger was physically proceeding from the terminal to the plane or whether it covered only mishaps during the actual physical process of boarding. At the Fifth International Congress on Air Navigation — held only 1 year after the Warsaw Convention was drafted — a leading expert on air travel, Mr. D. Goedhuis, presented a paper in which he summarized the prevailing interpretations of Article 17 as follows:

"Further, art. 17 mentions 'embarquement' and 'debarquement'. The question is how to explain these words? There are two views *viz*: a) in a broad sense: *i.e.* the embarking begins when the passenger leaves the station-building on his way to the aeroplane, standing in the flying field; the disembarking ends when



the passenger, arrived at destination, enters the station-building; b) in a narrow sense, i.e.: the getting on board and the alightment only comprise the actual getting in and out of the aeroplane." D. Goedhuis, *Observations Concerning Chapter 3 of the Convention of Warschau 1929, Cinquieme Congres Internationale de la Navigation Aerienne*, 1-6 Septembre 1931 (The Hague 1931) at 1163-64.

While Mr. Goedhuis advocated amending Article 17 to reflect the broad interpretation of "embarking", he was opposed by others, including at least one delegate to the Warsaw conference itself, who argued that the narrow interpretation which confined liability to accidents occurring during the actual process of boarding, was the proper one. It is significant to note, however, that under either interpretation, the injuries suffered by plaintiffs in the instant case would be outside the scope of Article 17. I therefore conclude that plaintiffs were not injured in the course of "embarking" as that term was restrictively intended.

My conclusion is not altered by the modern theories of accident cost allocation on which the Second Circuit relies in part in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, supra*. The Second Circuit finds that a broad construction of Article 17 is appropriate since the airline is in the best position to distribute accident costs among all passengers and to assume preventative measures. While I do not question the soundness of these principles in appropriate contexts, I believe that the explicit goals and policies which were voiced by the delegates to the Warsaw Convention and reaffirmed by the signing of the Montreal Agreement in 1966 foreclose reference to them in defining the scope of Article 17. Had the signatories to the Convention wished to amend it in order to reflect modern development in American tort law, they could have affirmatively acted in 1966 when the monetary damage limitation was increased and the airline's due care

defense was eliminated. Their failure to do so should not be disregarded, particularly if we keep in mind that this is an international agreement.

Having concluded that plaintiffs were injured at a location which was neither exposed to the hazards of air travel nor within the delegates' intended scope of coverage, I would ordinarily end my analysis. However, in view of the majority's emphasis on the activity in which plaintiffs were engaged at the time of injury, I feel compelled to state briefly my views as to the relevance of this factor and to address the majority's argument.

An examination of an individual's activity is only necessary, I believe, once it has been determined that the individual was situated in the immediate vicinity of an airplane where the risks of air travel are logically encountered. Obviously, the physical activity of walking toward a plane on the traffic apron or ascending the stairway to the plane's interior is no different than the activity in which a passenger engages at numerous locations within an airport. The distinguishing feature, therefore, must be the location at which this activity is performed.

Location, while important in identifying the potential class of passengers entitled to recover, is nevertheless not conclusive as to whether an individual passenger was injured while engaged in the operation of embarking. Rather, the injured victim's conduct must also be scrutinized in order to determine whether, objectively viewed, his activities were within the scope of Article 17. Clearly, an individual who is injured at a dangerous location while on a lark of his own cannot be said to be "embarking" and should not be permitted to recover under the Convention. Only those passengers who have departed from the safety of the terminal and are engaged in the activity of boarding or any of the steps which immediately precede boarding should be granted recovery.

Although conceding that plaintiff's had not completed the preliminary steps necessary to boarding their flight in that they had not been searched and had not departed from the search area to board the bus which would take them to their awaiting flight, the majority nevertheless concludes that by standing in line waiting to be searched, plaintiffs were engaged in the activity of embarking. It bases this conclusion on a finding that TWA had assumed control over the passengers and on its belief that terrorist attacks within an airport are inherent risks of modern air travel.

As previously noted, I do not adhere to the majority's view that terrorism within an airport is a unique peril of air navigation. Moreover, I question the relevance of this factor if, as the majority suggests, an analysis of the activity in which a passenger is engaged at the time of injury is to be largely controlling.

With respect to its assertion that TWA had assumed control over its passengers, the majority proves too much. It cannot be gainsaid that passengers who are actually boarding and even those who are proceeding from the terminal to the plane on the traffic apron are subject to the airline's authority. Control is therefore inherent under the more restrictive interpretation of Article 17 which I have proposed.

It is equally clear, however, that passengers at many locations within the terminal are also, to a large extent, under the control of the airline. The majority's control analysis is therefore, at best, imprecise. In apparent recognition of the over-inclusiveness of its control classification, the majority seeks to impose yet another restriction on the class of persons who are entitled to recover under Article 17, namely, membership in an identifiable group associated with a particular flight and located within a specific geographical area designated by the airline. In effect, however, this additional restriction elevates location — a factor

which the majority only nominally accepts — to a position of critical importance. Control becomes a mere artifice to permit recovery within the terminal, yet under limited circumstances.

I therefore conclude that the factors relied upon by the majority in support of its conclusion that plaintiffs were engaged in the activity of embarking are largely irrelevant. Since I believe that plaintiffs' location within the airport terminal precludes their recovery under Article 17, I would affirm the judgment of the district court.



# United States Court of Appeals For the Third Circuit

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CONSTANTINE EVANGELINOS, CALLIOPPI  
EVANGELINOS, ERMA EVANGELINOS, STELLA  
EVANGELINOS and MARY JULIA EVANGELINOS,  
APPELLANTS

*v.*

TRANS WORLD AIRLINES, INCORPORATED  
(D.C. Civil No. 74-165)

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ON APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Present: SEITZ, *Chief Judge* and VAN DUSEN and WEIS,  
*Circuit Judges*

## JUDGMENT

This cause came on to be heard on the record from the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania and was argued by counsel.

On consideration whereof, it is now here ordered and adjudged by this Court that the judgment of the said District Court, filed June 26, 1975, be, and the same is hereby reversed and the cause remanded for further proceedings consistent with the opinion of this Court. Costs taxed against appellee.

ATTEST:

(s) (Illegible), Clerk

May 4, 1976

Supreme Court, U. S.  
**FILED**

**MAR 2 1977**

**MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK**

IN THE  
**Supreme Court of the United States**  
**OCTOBER TERM, 1976**

**No. 76-1132**

**JULIO JOSE MARTINEZ HERNANDEZ, ET AL.,**  
*Petitioners,*

v.

**AIR FRANCE,**  
*Respondent.*

**RESPONDENT'S BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO  
PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI**

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**RANDAL R. CRAFT, JR.**  
**WILLIAM F. MARTIN, JR.**  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Counterstatement .....	1
Question Presented .....	3
ARGUMENT: REASONS FOR DENYING THE WRIT	
POINT I—Court decisions in cases involving post-flight accidents unanimously indicate that the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement are not applicable to petitioners' claims .....	3
POINT II—No conflict exists between the decision of the First Circuit in this case and prior decisions of the Second and Third Circuits .....	9
Conclusion .....	15
APPENDIX A—Opinion of United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in <i>Maugnie v. Compagnie Nationale Air France</i> , Decided January 19, 1977 .....	A1
APPENDIX B—En Banc Opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in <i>Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Incorporated</i> , Decided February 4, 1977 .....	B1

## TABLE OF CITATIONS

Cases:	PAGE
<i>Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , 393 F.Supp. 217 (S.D.N.Y.) <i>aff'd</i> , 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), <i>cert. denied</i> , 45 U.S.L.W. 3273 (Oct. 12, 1976), <i>rehearing denied</i> , 45 U.S.L.W. 3573 (Feb. 22, 1977) .....	5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
<i>Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , 14 Avi. 17,101 (3d Cir. 1976), <i>aff'd on rehearing en banc</i> , No. 75-1980 (filed Feb. 4, 1977) .....	5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
<i>Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.</i> , 13 Avi. 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. 1974) .....	6, 7
<i>Klein v. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines</i> , 46 App. Div. 2d 679, 360 N.Y.S. 2d 60 (2d Dep't 1974) .....	7, 8
<i>MacDonald v. Air Canada</i> , 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971) .....	3, 4, 5, 12
<i>Maché v. Air France</i> (1967), <i>Revue Française de Droit Aérien</i> 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen, 1967), <i>aff'd</i> , (1970), <i>Revue Française de Droit Aérien</i> 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970) .....	8, 9, 12
<i>Maugnie v. Compagnie Nationale Air France</i> , 4 Avi. 17,534 (9th Cir., 1977) .....	5, 6, 14, 15
<b>Statutes:</b>	
The Warsaw Convention (Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Transportation by Air), 49 Stat. 3000 et seq. (1934) .....	<i>passim</i>
<b>Other Authorities:</b>	
The Montreal Agreement, C.A.B. Agreement 18900, Order E-2360, May 13, 1966 .....	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10

IN THE  
Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1976

No. 76-1132

—————  
JULIO JOSE MARTINEZ HERNANDEZ, et al.,

*Petitioners,*

v.

AIR FRANCE,

*Respondent.*

—————  
**RESPONDENT'S BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO  
PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI**  
—————

**Counterstatement**

Petitioners' statement of the proceedings below and their statement of the facts are correct insofar as they go. However, respondent wishes to point out the significant additional fact that the present appeal concerns only 3 out of a total of 49 separate actions that have been filed against Air France in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico stemming from the terrorist attack at Lod Airport, Tel Aviv, Israel on May 30, 1972. The 3 cases presently on appeal are the only cases wherein the plaintiffs have alleged that Air France is liable by virtue of the provisions of the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement. The other 46 actions do not seek to impose liability against Air France under the Warsaw



Convention and the Montreal Agreement. They seek recovery on the basis of alleged negligence of Air France in permitting three Japanese, who caused the deaths and personal injuries, to board Flight No. 132 at Rome, Italy, en route to Tel Aviv, without searching either their persons or baggage. The 3 actions involved in this appeal involve 2 claims for wrongful death and 1 claim for personal injury.\* Only 5 plaintiffs are involved in these 3 cases. The other 46 actions filed in Puerto Rico consist of 30 personal injury cases, 12 death cases, and 4 cases involving claims for both death and personal injury. These 46 actions contain a total of 295 named plaintiffs.

In addition to the facts set forth in the petition it should be noted that the district court in its opinion stated: "From the time the passengers stepped out onto the movable stairs leading from the plane, all the facilities they used were owned and operated by the State of Israel or El Al, the Israeli National Airline, not by Air France." (Petitioners' Appendix, p. 14.) Furthermore, the checked baggage from the petitioners' flight was removed from the aircraft by employees of the Israeli Airport Authority, who handle the collection and distribution of checked baggage for all foreign carriers using Lod Airport. (Petitioners' Appendix, pp. 29-30, in the court below.) It should also be stated that the petitioners and other members of the Puerto Rican tour group to Israel were not required to pass through Israeli customs following the collection of their checked baggage. This baggage was to be taken directly to buses for transportation to the group's hotel by

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\* The complaints in 3 other cases contained vague references to the Warsaw Convention in jurisdictional allegations. Inasmuch as diversity of citizenship was present in each of these cases, the Warsaw Convention jurisdictional allegations in these complaints were dismissed by Judge Gignoux on Air France's oral motion during the course of the first combined pre-trial conference held in Puerto Rico on November 20, 1975 but their negligence causes of action remained undisturbed.

their local travel agent as soon as all of the baggage had been accumulated. (Petitioners' Appendix, p. 46, in the court below.)

### Question Presented

Does Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention, which makes an air carrier liable only for injuries sustained by an international passenger in an accident that "took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking", apply to injuries to arriving international passengers that occurred more than one-half hour after the passengers had deplaned and after the passengers had entered the airport terminal building, had passed their health and immigration checks, and had proceeded into an area that was not owned, operated, or controlled by their carrier and in which the passengers themselves were not under the carrier's control?

### ARGUMENT: REASONS FOR DENYING THE WRIT

#### POINT I

**Court decisions in cases involving post-flight accidents unanimously indicate that the Warsaw Convention and Montreal Agreement are not applicable to petitioners' claims.**

Prior to the case at bar, the leading case in the United States involving the interpretation of the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of . . . disembarking" contained in Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention was the decision in *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971). As the district court below recognized, and as petitioners apparently conceded in their brief in the circuit court, *MacDonald* is "a case substantially on all fours with the present actions." (Petitioners' Appendix p. 16.)

The plaintiff in *MacDonald* was a passenger traveling on an international ticket who suffered a fall in the Boston International Airport Terminal while awaiting the arrival of her baggage in the baggage delivery and customs claims area of the airport. The circuit court unanimously upheld a directed verdict dismissing the plaintiff's complaint, both upon the ground that she had not proved any negligence and also upon the ground that the provisions of the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement were not applicable to her case. In the portion of the opinion relating to the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement issue, the court held *both* that the plaintiff had not shown that there was an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17, and that the plaintiff's fall had not in any case occurred in the course of disembarking operations:

"We see no basis for finding an accident, the first requirement for invocation of the Convention. . . . On the facts established it seems as reasonable to suppose that some internal condition was the cause of the fall as that the fall was the result of an accident.

"Be this as it may, the Convention requires that the accident occur in the course of disembarking operations. If these words are given their ordinary meaning, it would seem that the operation of disembarking has terminated by the time the passenger has descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means have been supplied and has reached a safe point inside of the terminal, even though he may remain in the status of a passenger of the carrier while inside the building. Examination of the Convention's original purposes reinforces this view. . . . Partially in return for the imposition of recovery limits, and partially out of recognition of the difficulty of establishing the cause of an air transportation accident, the Conference also placed the burden on the [carrier] of disproving negligence when an accident occurred. . . . Neither the economic rationale for

liability limits, nor the rationale for the shift in the burden of proof, applies to accidents which are far removed from the operation of aircraft.\* Without determining where the exact line occurs, it had been crossed in the case at bar.

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\* "Neither does the imposition of liability without fault, as was effected, with respect to United States connected carriage, by the Montreal Agreement. The Agreement, as such, could not change the meaning of Article 17 of the Convention, but we believe its framers assumed the same restricted meaning of that article that we do."

439 F.2d at 1404-1405.

The most recent decision on the subject is *Maugnie v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 4 Avi. 17,534 (9th Cir., 1977) (Respondent's Appendix, p. A1). In that case the passenger had exited an Air France aircraft and had entered the Orly Airport terminal to go to another gate in order to take a connecting Swissair flight. As she was proceeding from the Air France gate down the hallway to the center of the main terminal, the passenger slipped and fell, incurring the injuries that gave rise to her complaint. The district court concluded that, at the time of her accident, the passenger had deplaned and had reached a safe point inside the airport terminal; furthermore, she had proceeded a substantial distance enroute to the Swissair departure area. Accordingly, the district court held that her injuries were not suffered either onboard the aircraft or in the course of any operations of disembarking. The plaintiff then appealed this decision.

In affirming this decision, the court of appeals followed the broad approach of recent embarkation decisions in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 393 F.Supp. 217 (S.D.N.Y.), *aff'd*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3273 (Oct. 12, 1976), *rehearing denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3573 (Feb. 22, 1977), and *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 14 Avi. 17,101 (3d Cir. 1976), *aff'd on*



*rehearing en banc*, No. 75-1990 (filed Feb. 4, 1977) (Respondent's Appendix, p. B1). (These decisions are discussed at length in Point II *infra*.) Under this approach the court of appeals in *Maugnie* assessed "the total circumstances surrounding a passenger's injuries, viewed against the intended meaning of Article 17" (Respondent's Appendix, p. A11). Location of the passenger was only one of several factors considered, other factors being the carrier's control over the location of the passenger and the likelihood of injury by causes inherent in air transportation.

The important point here is that, even under this expansive approach, the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit held that passenger Maugnie had completed disembarkation operations within the meaning of Article 17:

"Appellant's situation contrasts sharply with the status of the passengers in *Day* and *Evangelinos*. There the passengers had obtained their boarding passes and were standing in line at the departure gate, waiting to be searched immediately before boarding. On those facts, it was reasonable for the courts to conclude that the travelers were involved in embarkation operations. Appellant, on the other hand, had deplaned and was heading to the Swiss Air gate to make her connecting flight to Geneva at the time of injury. She had proceeded through a boarding lounge and into a common passenger corridor of Orly Airport which was neither owned nor leased by Air France. Furthermore, she was acting at her own direction and was no longer under the 'control' of Air France. Under these circumstances, we find that appellant had completed disembarkation operations within the meaning of Article 17."

(Respondent's Appendix, pp. A11-12.)

Another federal court case, *Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 13 Avi. 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. 1974), also held

that the Warsaw Convention was inapplicable to an accident involving a passenger that occurred inside the "terminal proper" at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. In that case, a passenger, arriving on a TWA flight from Lisbon, left the aircraft by walking through an expandable horizontal "jetway" that led from the aircraft door to the upper level of the terminal building. She walked across this upper level and boarded an escalator to the lower level of the terminal. The health and immigration booths, the baggage claim area, and the customs booths were all on the lower level toward which she was proceeding. She was injured in an accident on the escalator—before she had reached the health and immigration booths where her health card and passport were to be inspected. Her complaint against TWA was not filed within two years, and TWA moved to dismiss the complaint upon the ground that the plaintiff's cause of action was governed by the Warsaw Convention and was time-barred by the two-year period of limitation in Article 29. U.S. District Judge Ward decided otherwise, holding "that by the time plaintiff boarded the down escalator, she had disembarked from defendant's aircraft." Accordingly, it was held that the Warsaw Convention's period of limitation was not applicable to plaintiff's action. Applying *Felismina* to the present cases, it is clear that the passengers involved were inside the terminal building and had completed the post-flight processing that the plaintiff in *Felismina* had not yet even begun. Therefore, since the Warsaw Convention was not applicable in *Felismina*, it is perforce not applicable here.

A similar result was reached in the decision of the Appellate Division, Second Department, New York Supreme Court, in *Klein v. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines*, 46 App. Div. 2d 679, 360 N.Y.S. 2d 60 (2d Dep't 1974). That decision affirmed part of a decision of the New York Supreme Court, Kings County, that held the Warsaw Convention to be inapplicable to an action arising out of a

post-flight accident to an infant passenger at a baggage conveyor belt inside the terminal at Lod Airport, Tel Aviv, Israel. In that decision, which involved the very same area of the Lod Airport terminal building as is involved in the present cases, the appellate court in its unanimous decision found that there were unresolved factual questions preventing summary judgment dismissing two of the plaintiffs' causes of action based upon negligence, but the court affirmed the summary judgment dismissing the cause of action based upon the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement, stating:

"We agree with Special Term [the branch of the Supreme Court deciding the motion for summary judgment] . . . that plaintiffs, having gotten off the aircraft and arrived safely within the terminal, had disembarked within the meaning of Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention (49 U.S. Stat 3014) (Cf. *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402, 1405)."

The scope of the operations of disembarking under Article 17 has also been the subject of a decision by the highest court of France in *Maché v. Air France*, (1967) *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd*, (1970) *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970). The French court, interpreting a treaty drafted and debated in its own language, unequivocally stated that as regards accidents occurring on the ground, the Warsaw Convention does not apply beyond the traffic apron. In that case, the plaintiff was being led by two Air France stewardesses across the traffic apron from his plane toward the terminal building. Because of construction work, he had to take a short-cut through the customs area which was not on the traffic apron proper but off to the side and outside of the terminal building. While crossing the customs area which was on the same level as the traffic apron, and *before he even reached the terminal building*, plaintiff sustained his acci-

dent. In reaching its decision that the Warsaw Convention did not apply to this accident, the court stated:

"Consequently, if the Warsaw Convention regulates, among others, accidents arising on the ground, in the course of the operations of embarking or of disembarking, it is only to the extent that these operations are taking place on the traffic apron. . . ."

Translation from the French; *Maché v. Air France*, (1967) *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 343, 345 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd*, (1970) *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970).

In summary, no matter what their approaches, the decisions of the courts of the United States and France are unanimous in indicating that the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement are not applicable to causes of action for injuries to passengers that occurred more than one-half hour after the passengers had deplaned and after the passengers had entered the airport terminal, passed their health and immigration checks, and proceeded into an area that was not controlled by the carrier and in which the passengers themselves were no longer subject to the carrier's control. In other words, in situations such as the one in the present case, the applicable decisions have consistently held that the passengers were not in the process of performing an act required for disembarkation within the meaning of Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention.

## POINT II

**No conflict exists between the decision of the First Circuit in this case and prior decisions of the Second and Third Circuits.**

Having chosen to ignore the fact that decisions of the courts of the United States and France in cases involving *post-flight* accidents are unanimous in indicating that the



Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement are not applicable to their claims herein, the petitioners have chosen to base their application for a writ of certiorari primarily upon an alleged conflict between the First Circuit's decision in the case at bar and two recent decisions of the Second and Third Circuits involving *pre-flight* accidents in an airport terminal, namely *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3273 (Oct. 12, 1976), *rehearing denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3573 (Feb. 22, 1977), and *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 14 Avi. 17,101 (3d Cir. 1976), *aff'd on rehearing en banc*, No. 75-1990 (filed Feb. 4, 1977) (Respondent's Appendix, p. ).

As this Court is well aware, the *Day* and *Evangelinos* actions involved a terrorist attack at Athens airport on August 5, 1973. That attack occurred in the transit lounge of the airport, as the TWA passengers were lined up to be searched prior to proceeding through the gate to a bus that was to take them across the traffic apron to the waiting aircraft. In *Day*, the Second Circuit rejected TWA's argument that the application of Article 17 should be determined by reference only to the location where the accident occurred, and instead adopted a tripartite test based on activity, control and location which had been expounded by the district court. 528 F.2d at 33. Placing great reliance on the opinion in *Day*, the Third Circuit in *Evangelinos* also cited the factors of "activity" and "control" in reversing the decision of the district court which had granted TWA's motion for summary judgment.

The petitioners admit, as they must, that there is no open conflict between the First Circuit's opinion and the opinions in *Day* and *Evangelinos*, since the First Circuit clearly acknowledges the propriety of the tripartite test in determining the applicability of Article 17:

"We do not view our holding in *MacDonald* as necessarily foreclosing the adoption of the *Day-Evangelinos*

tripartite test, and we believe that the nature of a plaintiff's activity when injured, its location, and the extent to which the airline was exercising control over plaintiff at the time of injury are certainly relevant considerations in determining the applicability of Article 17."

(Petitioner's Appendix, pp. 24-25.) The First Circuit's opinion then proceeds to a detailed application of the "activity, location and control" test to the facts of the Tel Aviv massacre, as a result of which the First Circuit held that the tripartite test clearly militated against Article 17 coverage under the facts of this action. (Petitioner's Appendix, pp. 25-26.)

Despite the First Circuit's detailed application of the tripartite test, the petitioners assert that the First Circuit's decision is nevertheless in conflict with *Day* and *Evangelinos*. In making this argument, the petitioners focus upon the First Circuit's majority opinion discussion of the legislative history of Article 17 and the discussion of the relationship of terrorist attacks such as the Tel Aviv massacre to risks inherent in air travel, wherein Judges Coffin and Campbell question some of the underlying assumptions which led to the adoption of the tripartite test by the *Day* and *Evangelinos* courts. The petitioners, therefore, are essentially accusing the First Circuit of paying lip service to the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test, and of applying this test in such a restricted fashion as to conflict with the principles of the decisions of the Second and Third Circuits. This argument of the petitioners runs up against the immediate obstacle of Judge McEntee's concurring opinion in the case at bar, which, even with unreserved endorsement of the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test, nevertheless concurs with the majority opinion's result.

The primary fallacy of the petitioner's conflict argument, however, is that it totally ignores the fact that both the *Day* and *Evangelinos* decisions specifically discuss the

application of the tripartite test to the *disembarkation* situation, and both decisions indicate that a clear distinction exists between the processes of embarkation and the processes of disembarkation which militate against the application of Article 17 to actions such as the case at bar.

The Second Circuit decision in *Day* was handed down prior to the circuit court opinion in the present action. Nevertheless, in discussing the First Circuit's prior opinion in *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), which is discussed at length in Point I of this brief, the Second Circuit observed as follows:

"We find *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), cited to us by the appellant, clearly distinguishable. In *MacDonald*, the court declined to construe Article 17 as covering an elderly passenger who fell after disembarking. Mrs. MacDonald was, at the time of her accident, standing near the baggage 'pickup' area, waiting for her daughter to recover her luggage. Mrs. MacDonald was, therefore, not acting, as were the passengers in the case at bar, at the direction of the airlines, but was free to move about the terminal. Furthermore, she was not, as were the plaintiffs here, performing an act required for embarkation or disembarkation."

528 F.2d at 34, n. 8. In the *en banc* opinion of the Third Circuit in *Evangelinos*, handed down following the First Circuit's opinion in the case at bar, the Third Circuit similarly discusses and distinguishes the disembarkation situation and finds no conflict between that decision on the one hand and, on the other hand, the First Circuit's decisions in the case at bar and in *MacDonald* and the French decision of *Maché v. Air France*:

"Neither *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), nor the French case of *Maché v. Air*

*France* . . . is inconsistent with the conclusion that 'the operations of embarking' had commenced at the time of the accident in this case. First, both cases involved disembarking, where the nature and extent of the carrier's control over the passenger and the type of activity in which plaintiff was engaged differed significantly from the case at bar.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The recent case of *Hernandez v. Air France*, No. 76-1146 (1st Cir., Nov. 19, 1976), makes clear that the First Circuit's earlier decision in *MacDonald* is not in conflict with the conclusion which we reach here. In *MacDonald*, the plaintiff was injured while she was waiting for her baggage in the baggage claim area of Boston International Airport. She was in no sense under the control of the airline or acting as a part of a group under direct airline supervision. In *Re Tel Aviv*, (D.P.R., Dec. 19, 1975) (No. 518-72, et al.), *aff'd sub nom., Hernandez et al. v. Air France*, — F.2d —, No. 76-1146 (1st Cir. Nov. 19, 1976), a disembarkation case arising in the same circuit as *MacDonald*, nevertheless apparently subscribes to the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite (location, activity and control) test, but held that the plaintiff (in *Hernandez*) even under that test could not recover."

(Respondent's Appendix, pp. B9-10.)

Further support for the result reached by the First Circuit in applying the *Day-Evangelinos* test is gathered from an examination of the Memorandum of the United States, as amicus curiae in the *Day* case, filed by the Solicitor General. The conclusion of that Memorandum was that the petition for the writ of certiorari in *Day* should be denied. In so concluding, the Solicitor General was of the opinion that the Second Circuit's decision in *Day* did not create a conflict between circuits that required resolution by this Court:

"Nor does the decision below create a conflict that should be resolved by this Court. The court of appeals' decision is, of course, in harmony with the Third Circuit's subsequent opinion in *Evangelinos v.*



*Trans World Airlines, Inc., supra*, and it is consistent with the earlier decision of the First Circuit in *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402. In the latter case, the plaintiff had sustained an injury when she fell in the baggage claim area of an air terminal; the court held that the evidence was insufficient to establish that the fall was an 'accident' within the meaning of Article 17 (439 F.2d at 1404-1405) and that, in the alternative, the fall had not occurred during any of the operations of disembarking (439 F.2d at 1405). The court reached the latter conclusion on the ground that the plaintiff had 'reached a safe point inside of the terminal' (*ibid.*), where she was 'far removed from the operation of aircraft' (*ibid.*). It seems likely that that court of appeals below would have reached the same result on those facts: *although the activity of retrieving baggage is related to the process of disembarking, it is not normally performed subject to the specific directions of the carrier, and it ordinarily is removed both in time and place from the actual deplaning.*"

*Memorandum of the United States*, pp. 12-13 (emphasis supplied).

Finally, conclusive support for the result reached by the First Circuit in its application of the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test to the facts of this action is obtained from the recent decision of the Ninth Circuit in *Maugnie v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 14 Avi. 17,534 (9th Cir. 1977), a decision of which the attorneys for the petitioners are apparently unaware. In *Maugnie*, which is discussed at length in Point I of this brief, the plaintiff was injured following her deplaning from an Air France aircraft and while she was proceeding down a passenger corridor leading from the Air France gate to the main terminal area. The accident in *Maugnie* thus occurred at an earlier point, both in terms of time and loca-

tion inside the terminal, than the attack involved in the case at bar. The Ninth Circuit, having the full benefit of the prior decisions of the First, Second, and Third Circuits, held that the accident did not occur in the course of disembarking within the meaning of Article 17. This decision is especially significant, since, like Judge McEntee in his concurring opinion in the present action, the Ninth Circuit completely endorsed the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test and based its decision entirely on the application of that test to the facts of that action. The decision of the Ninth Circuit in *Maugnie*, therefore, clearly demonstrates that the petitioners herein are in error in their assertion that the First Circuit incorrectly applied the *Day-Evangelinos* test to the facts of this action.

From the foregoing discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the holding of the First Circuit in the present action is clearly in conformity with the approach to Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention enunciated by the Second Circuit in *Day*, followed by the Third Circuit in *Evangelinos*, and, of course, by the most recent decision of the Ninth Circuit in *Maugnie*. Accordingly, no conflict between circuits exists as to the interpretation of the scope of the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking" contained in Article 17.

## CONCLUSION

The petition for a writ of certiorari should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

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## APPENDIX A

Opinion of United State Court of Appeals for the  
Ninth Circuit in *Maugnie v. Compagnie Nationale  
Air France*, Decided January 19, 1977.

A1

### Appendix A.

#### UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

SIMONE MAUGNIE,

*Plaintiff-Appellant,*

vs.

COMPAGNIE NATIONALE AIR FRANCE,

*Defendant-Appellee.*

No. 74-2672

OPINION

[January 19, 1977]

Appeal from the United States District Court  
for the Central District of California

Before: DUNIWAY and WALLACE, Circuit Judges,  
and RICHEY,\* District Judge.

RICHEY, District Judge:

On this appeal we are required to interpret the meaning of "disembarking" as used in Article 17 of the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air (the "Warsaw Convention"),<sup>1</sup> which provides as follows:

Article 17. The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger, *if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking and disembarking* (emphasis added).

\* The Honorable Mary Anne Riehey, United States District Judge for the District of Arizona, sitting by designation.

<sup>1</sup> 49 Stat. 3000 *et seq.* (1934), reprinted at 49 U.S.C. § 1502 Note.



## Appendix A.

Appellant contends that the district court erred in holding that her injury did not occur in the course of disembarking within the meaning of Article 17. Unpersuaded by appellant's arguments, we affirm.

The facts are not in dispute. In 1971 appellant contracted with Air France, an international air carrier, for flight from Los Angeles, California, to Paris, France, where she was to transfer to Swiss Air for flight to Geneva, Switzerland. When appellant reached Paris, she exited from the Air France plane and entered the Orly Airport terminal to make her Swiss Air connection. She proceeded down the only passenger corridor leading from the Air France gate to the main terminal area. In a hallway between the airline gate and the center of the terminal, appellant slipped and fell, incurring the injuries which gave rise to the complaint. On reviewing the facts, the district court concluded that "[s]ince at the time of her accident, plaintiff had deplaned the Air France aircraft, had reached a safe point inside Orly Airport, and had proceeded a substantial distance en route to the Swiss Air departure area, the injuries complained of were not suffered 'on board the aircraft or in the course of any operations of . . . disembarking.'" C.R. 67. The court thereupon dismissed the complaint with prejudice, pursuant to stipulation of counsel.

The parties are in agreement that the Warsaw Convention was applicable to appellant's flight from Los Angeles to Paris. The sole dispute on this appeal is whether appellant's injury is comprehended by Article 17. To arrive at a workable definition of the term "in the course of . . . disembarking" as used in Article 17, we may properly look to the history and purpose of the Convention and subsequent interpretations thereof. The scope of the Warsaw Convention is a matter of federal law and federal treaty interpretation, and must be determined from an

## Appendix A.

examination of the "four corners of the treaty." *American Trust Co. v. Smyth*, 247 F.2d 149, 153 (9th Cir. 1957); *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co., Ltd.*, 388 F. Supp. 1238, 1249 (S.D.N.Y. 1975). Moreover, it is well established that treaty interpretation involves a consideration of legislative history and the intent of the contracting parties. *Choctaw Nation v. United States*, 318 U.S. 423, 431-432 (1943); *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31, 35-36 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, — U.S. — (Oct. 12, 1975); *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323, 336-338 (5th Cir. 1967); *Rosman v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 34 N.Y.2d 385, 392, 358 N.Y.S.2d 97, 314 N.E.2d 848, 854 (1974).<sup>2</sup>

The Convention was drafted in the late 1920's when the international air transportation industry was in its beginning stages. In order to provide a favorable environment for the industry's growth, various sovereignties agreed to create a uniform body of law governing the

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<sup>2</sup> Appellant argues that since jurisdiction in this action is based on diversity of citizenship, the district court should have consulted conflicts rules in interpreting the scope of Article 17. It is true that the Warsaw Convention does not create a cause of action, but merely creates a presumption of liability if the otherwise applicable substantive law provides a claim for relief based on the injury alleged. *Noel v. Linea Aeropostal Venezolana*, 247 F.2d 677 (2d Cir. 1957), *cert. den.* 355 U.S. 907 (1957); *Komlos v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 111 F. Supp. 393 (S.D.N.Y. 1952), *rev'd on other grounds*, 209 F.2d 436 (2d Cir. 1953); *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co., Ltd.*, 388 F. Supp. 1238 (S.D.N.Y. 1975). Thus, conflicts rules are applicable in determining whether a cause of action exists. *E.g.*, *Husserl, supra*. However, the determination of the scope of the Warsaw Convention is a matter of federal law and federal treaty interpretation. Conflicts principles are not applicable in interpreting the words of the Convention; rather, the meaning of Article 17 should be ascertained from the intention of the drafters and the goals of the Convention. *Husserl, supra*; *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323 (5th Cir. 1967).

## Appendix A.

rights and responsibilities of passengers and air carriers in international air transportation. See Lowenfeld and Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497, 499-500 (1967); *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, *supra*, at 326-351, and authorities cited therein. The drafters of the treaty proposed to limit liability for injuries caused by air accidents and, as an offset, proposed a presumption of liability on the part of the air carrier. As originally drawn, the Convention established a presumption of liability with a liability limitation of \$8,300 per passenger for injuries comprehended by Article 17. See Articles 20, 22 and 23.<sup>3</sup>

In 1965 the United States formally denounced the Warsaw Convention because of the low limitation on damages.<sup>4</sup> Notice of denunciation was withdrawn, however, on the signing of the interim Montreal Agreement. The Agreement, approved by the United States through its Civil Aeronautics Board,<sup>5</sup> established an increased liability limit of \$75,000 per passenger for international air transportation involving a location within the United States. Addi-

<sup>3</sup> Article 20 provides in pertinent part: "(1) The carrier shall not be liable if he proves that he and his agents have taken all necessary measures to avoid the damage or that it was impossible for him or them to take such measures."

Article 22 provides in pertinent part: "(1) In the transportation of passengers the liability of the carrier for each passenger shall be limited to the sum of 125,000 francs."

Article 23 provides: "Any provision tending to relieve the carrier of liability or to fix a lower limit than that which is laid down in this convention shall be null and void, but the nullity of any such provision shall not involve the nullity of the whole contract, which shall remain subject to the provisions of this convention."

<sup>4</sup> Dept. of State Press Release No. 268, Nov. 15, 1965.

<sup>5</sup> Approved by the Civil Aeronautics Board, May 13, 1966, Order E-23680, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966).

## Appendix A.

tionally, the Agreement imposed absolute liability on air carriers, thus eliminating the defense of due care set forth in Article 20(1).<sup>6</sup>

Today the Convention functions to protect passengers from the hazards of air travel and also spreads the accident cost of air transportation among all passengers. *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*, 528 F.2d at 36. Taking a broad view of the term "accident," courts generally have extended air carrier liability to include injuries resulting from such modern air hazards as hijacking and terrorist attacks. *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, Civil No. 74-165 (3d Cir., filed May 4, 1976); *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*; *Husserl v. Swiss Air Transport Co., Ltd.*, 351 F. Supp. 702 (S.D.N.Y. 1972), *aff'd* 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973); *In re Tel Aviv*, 405 F. Supp. 154 (D.P.R. 1975); *Burnett v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 368 F. Supp. 1152 (D. N. Mex. 1973); *but see Hernandez v. Air France*, No. 76-1146, Slip Op., 8-9 (1st Cir., filed Nov. 19, 1976). However, the courts have not been uniform in construing "in the course of . . . embarking or disembarking" as used in Article 17, due perhaps to the ambiguous history of the Convention and the changes in air transportation technology since the original drafting.

In construing "disembarking," several courts have interpreted Article 17 as defining Warsaw coverage primarily by location of the passenger. In *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1970), upon which the district court herein relied, injuries sustained by a

<sup>6</sup> The Montreal Agreement, not a treaty itself but an agreement among the carriers, did not change the text of the Warsaw Convention. Rather, it modified the terms of the Convention with respect to international transportation involving a location in the United States. See generally Lowenfeld and Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967).



## Appendix A.

passenger while awaiting her suitcase in defendant airline's baggage area were held to be outside the scope of the Convention. Relying on the ordinary meaning of the words of the treaty, the First Circuit reasoned that the "operation of disembarking has terminated by the time the passenger has descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means have been supplied and has reached a safe point inside the terminal, even though he may remain in the status of a passenger of the carrier while inside the building." 439 F.2d at 1405.

Additionally, the court noted that the most important purpose of the Convention was to protect air carriers from "the crushing consequences of a catastrophic accident . . . . Neither the economic rationale for liability limits, nor the rationale for the shift in the burden of proof, applies to accidents which are far removed from the operation of the aircraft." 439 F.2d at 1405.

The First Circuit reaffirmed the *MacDonald* decision in *Hernandez v. Air France*, *supra*, and at the same time indicated its willingness to consider factors other than location of passenger in interpreting Article 17. There the issue was whether Article 17 comprehended passenger injuries incurred in a terrorist attack while passengers were waiting in the baggage retrieval area of the air terminal. Applying the analysis utilized in *Day* and *Evangelinos*, discussed *infra*, the court considered the location of the passengers and, additionally, the nature of the passengers' activity and whether the passengers were under the control of the carrier at the time of injury. The court found that application of those criteria required the conclusion that the *Hernandez* plaintiffs should not recover under the Warsaw Convention.

While recognizing that the "tripartite test of *Day-Evangelinos*" might be useful for close cases, the court preferred an interpretation of Article 17 which placed at least initial

## Appendix A.

emphasis on physical location of the passengers. On reviewing the legislative history of the Convention, the court was persuaded that the Convention delegates intended "embarkation and disembarkation" to mean "essentially the physical activity of entering or exiting from an aircraft." Slip Op., 7-8. Moreover, the court was reluctant to expand air carrier liability to cover all acts of in-terminal terrorism, since the risk of such random violence was deemed not a risk inherent in air travel. The court concluded that the process of disembarkation was completed by the time the passengers had left the aircraft and its immediate vicinity, were inside the terminal and were no longer acting at the direction of the carrier.

*In re Tel Aviv*, *supra*, also involved a terrorist attack on passengers who had deplaned and were waiting in the baggage area of the terminal building. Endorsing a test based primarily on physical location of passengers, the district court held that the Convention did not apply. In the court's view, the legislative history of the Convention made clear that the delegates to the Convention intended to exclude from coverage accidents occurring inside an airport terminal building. The court noted that the Warsaw Convention delegates specifically rejected a proposal from the Comité International Technique [d'Experts] Juridiques Aériens (CITEJA) which would have made the carrier liable from the time travelers, goods, or baggage first enter the airport of departure to the moment when they leave the airport of destination. 405 F. Supp. at 157, citing from Minutes, *Second International Conference on Private Aeronautical Law*, October 4-12, 1929, Warsaw (R. Horner and D. Legrez, transl. 1975) (hereinafter *Minutes*). The court concluded that the *MacDonald* test was appropriate:

[T]he intent of the Warsaw Conference in rejecting the CITEJA draft and in declining to impose in Article 17 the same extent of carrier liability for passengers as

## Appendix A.

that provided by Article 18 for goods and baggage<sup>7</sup> was clearly to exclude liability as to passengers for accidents which occur after the passenger "has reached a safe point inside the terminal," and "which are far removed from the operation of the aircraft." (Citations omitted.) 405 F. Supp. at 157.

The court indicated that embarkation and disembarkation might be distinguished for purposes of Article 17, since the embarking passenger must perform certain required acts within the terminal as a condition of completing his journey. In contrast, the disembarking passenger normally "has few activities, if any, which the air carrier requires him to perform" once the passenger has entered the terminal building. At 157 n.2, quoting from *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 393 F. Supp. 217, 223 (S.D.N.Y. 1975). Similarly, other courts have denied Warsaw coverage to in-terminal accidents in the context of disembarkation. *Felismina v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 13 Avi. Cas. 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. 1974) (injury on escalator leading to lower level of terminal); *Klein v. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines*, 46 A.D. 2d 679, 360 N.Y.S.2d 60 (2d Dept. 1974) (injury on baggage conveyor belt inside terminal); cf. *Mache v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit [Aérien] 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd* Rev. Fr. Droit [Aérien] 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970) (injury in customs area off the traffic apron).

<sup>7</sup> Article 18 provides broad coverage for goods and baggage: "(1) The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the destruction or loss of, or of damage to, any checked baggage or any goods, if the occurrence which caused the damage so sustained took place during the transportation by air. (2) The transportation by air within the meaning of the preceding paragraph shall comprise the period during which the baggage or goods are in charge of the carrier, whether in an airport or on board an aircraft, or, in the case of a landing outside an airport, in any place whatsoever."

## Appendix A.

On the other hand, the Second and Third Circuits have refused to give a strictly geographical interpretation to the language of Article 17 with respect to "operations of embarking." In *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*, and *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra*, the courts of appeals extended Warsaw coverage to personal injury claims of passengers caught in a terrorist attack in the transit lounge of Hellinikon Airport in Athens, Greece. At the time of the attack, the passengers were standing in line at the departure gate ready to proceed to the aircraft.

In *Day*, the Second Circuit unanimously rejected a "rigid location-based rule" as incompatible with the primary goal of the Warsaw drafters—"to create a system of liability rules that would cover all the hazards of air travel." 528 F.2d at 38.\* In the court's view, the Montreal Agreement, with its imposition of absolute liability and greatly increased liability limits, demonstrated that protection of the passenger was one of the present-day functions of the Convention. Recognizing that air travel hazards now include terrorism and hijacking and that such perils often spill over into the airline terminal, the court found that injuries resulting from a terrorist attack while passengers were waiting to board were within the scope of Article 17 as modified by the Montreal Agreement.

The court approved of the district court's interpretation of the intended meaning of Article 17. The district judge had rejected the strict location-based formula urged by the airline and had applied instead a tripartite test based on activity (what the plaintiffs were doing), control (at whose

\* The Second Circuit viewed the delegates' rejection of the proposal that carrier liability explicitly cover in-terminal injuries as an indication of the delegates' preference for a flexible approach. The court felt that the most one could infer from the delegates' action was "a reluctance to cover *all* accidents occurring inside a terminal, not a determination that *no* such accidents should be covered." 528 F.2d at 35 n. 12.



## Appendix A.

direction), and location. *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 393 F. Supp. 217 (S.D.N.Y. 1975).

Similarly, in *Evangelinos, supra*, the Third Circuit in a two-to-one decision, followed the *Day* analysis and rejected the airline's argument that embarkation operations under Article 17 could never occur inside a terminal building. The court reasoned that neither the language of Article 17 nor the delegates' rejection of the CITEJA draft compelled a conclusion that the draftsmen intended a strict location-based test.

The most that can be said is that the draftsmen rejected the concept of automatic liability for all accidents within the limits of the aerodrome. Our conclusion that under certain circumstances there may be liability for some accidents within a terminal building is not inconsistent with that intent. Slip Op., 9.

The court felt that it was accommodating the principal concerns of those who opposed the CITEJA proposal<sup>9</sup> without going beyond the plain meaning of Article 17 by taking into consideration "the carrier's control over the passengers and the likelihood of injury by causes inherent in air transportation." Slip Op., 9. See also *Husserl v. Swiss*

<sup>9</sup> The court noted that the delegates' chief objection to the CITEJA draft was that the proposal would extend carrier liability to injuries incurred when the airline had no control over the passenger. Slip Op., 9 n. 12, citing *Minutes* at 73. The court thus reasoned that where passengers were inside the terminal building but within the control of the airline, they were not automatically excluded from the intended scope of the Warsaw Convention. Chief Judge Seitz, in dissent, urged a more restrictive interpretation of Article 17 which would focus primarily on location of the passenger and secondarily on activity. Under his interpretation, "[o]nly those passengers who have departed from the safety of the terminal and are engaged in the activity of boarding or any of the steps which immediately precede boarding should be granted recovery." Slip Op., 20.

## Appendix A.

*Air Transport Co., Ltd.*, *supra*, 388 F. Supp. at 1245-48, giving a flexible interpretation to the phrase "on board the aircraft" as used in Article 17.

On reviewing the authorities cited to us, we find that a rule based solely on location of passengers is not in keeping with modern air transportation technology and ignores the advent of the mobile boarding corridors utilized by many modern air terminals.<sup>10</sup> Today the expandable boarding units have eliminated to a great extent the need for embarkation and disembarkation outside the terminal building. Thus, determining whether passengers were inside or outside the airport terminal at the time of injury should not end the analysis. Further, we note that some commentators have concluded that "control" is the decisive factor. Shawcross and Beaumont, *Air Law* 441-442 (3d Ed. 1966); Matte, *Traite de Droit Aerien-Aeronautique*, 404-405 (1964) (cited in *Day*, 528 F.2d at 37 n. 17.)

In short, since the Convention drafters did not draw a clear line, this Court is also reluctant to formulate an inflexible rule. Rather, we prefer an approach which requires an assessment of the total circumstances surrounding a passenger's injuries, viewed against the background of the intended meaning of Article 17. Location of the passenger is but one of several factors to be considered.

However, even under the more flexible interpretation of the language of Article 17, appellant's claim does not come within the scope of the Convention. Appellant's situation contrasts sharply with the status of the passengers in *Day* and *Evangelinos*. There the passengers had obtained their

<sup>10</sup> In construing the scope of the Convention, we may properly consider changes in circumstances subsequent to the drafting of the treaty. See *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323, 336-337 (5th Cir. 1967); *Eck v. United Arab Airlines*, 15 N.Y.2d 53, 203 N.E.2d 640 (1964); ALI Restatement Second of Foreign Relations Law §§ 147, 153.

## Appendix A.

boarding passes and were standing in line at the departure gate, waiting to be searched immediately before boarding. On those facts, it was reasonable for the courts to conclude that the travelers were involved in embarkation operations. Appellant, on the other hand, had deplaned and was heading to the Swiss Air gate to make her connecting flight to Geneva at the time of injury. She had proceeded through a boarding lounge and into a common passenger corridor of Orly Airport which was neither owned nor leased by Air France. Furthermore, she was acting at her own direction and was no longer under the "control" of Air France. Under these circumstances, we find that appellant had completed disembarkation operations within the meaning of Article 17.

Judgment affirmed.

WALLACE, Circuit Judge, Concurring:

The majority recognizes that application of either the location-of-the-passenger test of *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), or the tripartite test of *Day v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), cert. denied, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S. Oct. 12, 1976) (No. 75-1354), results in the same disposition: affirmance of the district court's judgment and denial of recovery to plaintiff Maignie. It is therefore plainly unnecessary in this case to resolve an important question concerning an international treaty. We ought not to be reaching out to do so.

But if choose I must, I would choose the *MacDonald* test. I agree with the district judge that that test is more in keeping with both a fair reading of the language of Article 17 and the Article's historical derivation. See generally Note, *Warsaw Convention—Air Carrier Liability for Passenger Injuries Sustained Within a Terminal*, 45 Fordham L. Rev. 369, 370-76, 379-86 (1976). As the First

## Appendix A.

Circuit just recently noted in *Hernandez v. Air France*, No. 76-1146 (1st Cir. Nov. 19, 1976), aff'g 405 F. Supp. 154 (D.P.R. 1975):

We are persuaded that the delegates [to the Warsaw Convention] understood embarkation and disembarkation as essentially the physical activity of entering or exiting from an aircraft, rather than as a broader notion of initiating or ending a trip.

Slip op. at 7-8. Indeed, all

courts defining "disembarking" have consistently refused to extend the coverage of the Warsaw Convention to encompass injuries occurring within the terminal. The principle announced in *MacDonald* and followed by the courts in *Felismina [v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.]*, 13 Av. Cas. ¶ 17,145 (S.D.N.Y. 1974)] and [*In re*] *Tel Aviv* [405 F. Supp. 154 (D.P.R. 1975)], created a standard which emphasized the passenger's location, thereby ending liability when the passenger has reached a "safe" point within the terminal.

Note, *supra*, 45 Fordham L. Rev. at 376.

The *Day* test, on the other hand, suffers from several serious flaws. First, the conclusions reached by *Day*, and by *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, No. 75-1990 (3d Cir. May 4, 1976), motion for rehearing en banc granted (June 3, 1976), which follows *Day*, "rest upon a somewhat selective reading of the Warsaw minutes." Note, *supra*, 45 Fordham L. Rev. at 380. In other words, the substantial portions of the legislative history favoring the location test, see *id.* at 380-81, were disregarded.

Second, the *Day* test is bottomed on a social theory of compensation designed to spread the burden of damages from travel to all travelers. By relying on this theory of social engineering, "the *Day* court clearly injected policy



*Appendix A.*

arguments alien to the spirit of the Warsaw convention when drafted in 1929." *Id.* at 385. Moreover, it is not possible, in my view, to implement such a theory under the current terms of the Warsaw Convention without such a torturing of language as to constitute a redrafting. The court in *Day*, unfortunately, engaged in such contortions. If the signatories of the Convention wish to redraft it, they may do so, but the courts should not.

Finally, it seems clear to me that the *Day* test was designed to extend a right of recovery to persons for whom sympathy inspires a method of compensation. The *Day* test was meant to be plaintiffs' law. Yet in many cases it may operate to thwart plaintiffs' attempts to recover the full value of their claims. The Warsaw Convention is a two-edged sword: the basis of liability is strict but at the same time the amount recoverable is limited. *See Mache v. Air France*, [1968] D.S. Jur. 515, [1967] *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 343 (Cour d'Appel, Rouen), *aff'd*, [1971] D.S. Jur. 373, [1970] *Revue Francaise de Droit Aérien* 311 (Cass. civ. 1re), where the plaintiff-passenger argued against the applicability of the Warsaw Convention in an effort to avoid its ceiling on recovery. Thus, even if it is accepted on its own terms, the *Day* test may have perverse and unintended consequences.

Accordingly, I concur only in the result.

## **APPENDIX B**

**En Banc Opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Incorporated*, Decided February 4, 1977.**



B1

*Appendix B.*

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT

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No. 75-1990

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CONSTANTINE EVANGELINOS, CALLIOPPI EVANGELINOS, ERMA EVANGELINOS, STELLA EVANGELINOS and MARY JULIA EVANGELINOS,

*Appellants*

*v.*

TRANS WORLD AIRLINES, INCORPORATED

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(D.C. Civil No. 74-165)

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APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Argued February 3, 1976

Before SEITZ, *Chief Judge*, and VAN DUSEN and WEIS,  
*Circuit Judges*

Reargued in banc November 4, 1976

Before SEITZ, *Chief Judge*, and VAN DUSEN, ALDISERT,  
ADAMS, GIBBONS, ROSENN, HUNTER, WEIS and GARTH,  
*Circuit Judges*

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## Appendix B.

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## OPINION OF THE COURT

(Filed February 4, 1977)

VAN DUSEN, *Circuit Judge*.

On August 5, 1973, the Transit Lounge of the Hellinkon Airport in Athens, Greece, was the scene of a vicious terrorist attack on the passengers of TWA's New York bound Flight 881. The principal question presented by this interlocutory appeal<sup>1</sup> concerns the liability of Trans World Airlines under the terms of the Warsaw Convention, 49 Stat. 3000, *et seq.* (1934), as modified by the Montreal Agreement of 1966, 31 Fed. Reg. 7302 (1966).<sup>2</sup> The district court concluded that the terms of the Convention were not applicable to the plaintiffs at the time of the terrorist

<sup>1</sup> By amended order dated June 26, 1975, the district court certified this appeal pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1292(b) (232-33a). On July 21, 1975, we granted plaintiff-appellants' petition for permission to appeal. Jurisdiction is based on 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1332. Plaintiffs are citizens of Ohio. Defendant is incorporated in the State of Delaware and has its principal place of business in New York.

<sup>2</sup> Both the Convention, a treaty officially entitled "A Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating To International Transportation by Air," and the Montreal Agreement are reprinted at 49 U.S.C. § 1502 note (1970).

## Appendix B.

attack and accordingly granted TWA's motion for partial summary judgment, dismissing the claim under the Warsaw Convention.<sup>3</sup> *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines*, 396 F. Supp. 95 (W.D. Pa. 1975). We reverse and remand.

The facts of the attack on which this litigation is based have been exhaustively summarized elsewhere<sup>4</sup> and need not be repeated here. It is enough to state briefly that, at the time of the attack, plaintiffs had already completed all the steps necessary to boarding the aircraft except (1) undergoing physical and handbag searches,<sup>5</sup> and (2) physically proceeding from the search area to the aircraft some 250 meters away. Immediately after Flight 881 was announced over the Transit Lounge loudspeaker, the passengers were instructed to form two lines in front of Departure Gate 4. And, while all but a handful of passengers were standing in those lines awaiting the search procedure,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The complaint alleged both absolute liability under the Warsaw Convention, as modified, and negligence.

<sup>4</sup> *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, *supra* at 96-98, and *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S., October 12, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> These searches were required and conducted by the Greek Government and were prerequisites of being permitted to leave the airport by plane. TWA had two guards stationed inside the terminal building immediately beyond the search procedure area.

<sup>6</sup> The district court stated that:

"... entrance to [the Transit Lounge] is restricted to passengers ticketed and scheduled to depart on international flights of the ... carriers operating out of the terminal and to other personnel, who are not passengers, needed to service the area. ... At ... Gate [4], there are two separate lines, one for males and one for females, where there is a handbag search and a physical search made by the Greek Police. There are tables for examination of hand luggage and behind the tables were located two booths for physical search of all persons intending to depart. After the search, passengers would pro-

(footnote continued on following page)



## Appendix B.

two terrorists fired bursts of automatic weapons fire in the general direction of the TWA queues and hurled hand grenades, which exploded in the vicinity of the passengers.

Under the terms of the Warsaw Convention, as modified, TWA is absolutely liable up to a limit of \$75,000. per passenger if an incident which causes passenger injury or death falls within the ambit of Article 17 of the Convention.<sup>7</sup> Article 17 provides:

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ceed through double doors out of the Transit Lounge where they boarded buses for transportation to the aircraft stationed at some distance from Gate 4.

"... Two TWA Security Guards were stationed at Gate 4 as well as at least two passenger service personnel of TWA. After being physically searched, the passengers would have walked to two sets of exit doors which led from the Transit Lounge to a raised terrace attached to the terminal building. Two sets of stairs were located on the east side of the terrace leading to a waiting area where there was a bus . . . intended to carry persons across the traffic apron a distance of approximately 250 meters to where the airplanes were parked for loading.

"At the time of the attack, all eighty-nine passengers scheduled to board TWA Flight 881 had checked in and received their boarding passes. The Plaintiffs had completed the various steps required and began to queue up in two lines preparatory to proceeding through the hand baggage and physical searches. . . .

"Approximately seven Flight 881 passengers had departed through Gate 4, exited the Transit Lounge, and had either boarded or were about to board the bus previously referred to. The great majority of the eighty-nine scheduled passengers for Flight 881 were in line in front of the tables at Gate 4 at the time of the incident. The Plaintiffs were injured while being queued up in line in front of Gate 4 while waiting to be searched."

Pages 97-98 of 396 F. Supp. (footnotes omitted).

<sup>7</sup> As originally conceived and drafted, the Convention effected a bargain in which airline passengers traded a monetary limitation on damages—the equivalent of \$8,300. per passenger—for the es-

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## Appendix B.

"The carrier shall be liable for damage sustained in the event of the death or wounding of a passenger or any other bodily injury suffered by a passenger if the accident which caused the damage so sustained took place on board the aircraft or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking." (Emphasis added.)

TWA does not dispute the district court's conclusion that a terrorist attack on airline passengers is an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17. Thus the central question is whether the attack took place "in the course of any of the operations of embarking . . . ."

Our task has been significantly facilitated by the Second Circuit's recent decision in *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), cert. denied, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (U.S., October 12, 1976), an identical case arising out

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tablishment of a rebuttable presumption of liability on the part of the carrier for "accidents" falling within the ambit of the Convention. Warsaw Convention, Chap. III. American dissatisfaction with this bargain, especially the limits on damages, ultimately led to the Montreal Agreement, a voluntary agreement between air carriers governing international transportation that involved a United States location. Pursuant to the Agreement, each participating airline filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a contract under which the damages limit was raised to \$75,000. and the various carriers agreed not to assert any of the affirmative defenses provided in Article 20 of the Convention. The effect was contractual creation of a new regime of absolute liability for damages arising from incidents falling within the Convention. For excellent discussions of the background of the Warsaw Convention and the Montreal Agreement, see *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323 (5th Cir. 1967), cert. denied, 392 U.S. 905 (1968); Lowenfeld & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967); Note, *Warsaw Convention—Air Carrier Liability For Passenger Injuries Sustained Within A Terminal*, 45 Ford. L. Rev. 369 (issue of November 1976).

## Appendix B.

of the same incident.<sup>8</sup> See also *Leppo v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, — Misc. 2d — (N.Y. Sup. Ct. No. 21770-1973, Trial Term Part 62, Decision of Mar. 10, 1976, N.Y. County). In the *Day* case, Chief Judge Kaufman, in a thorough and scholarly opinion, carefully analyzed the history and purposes of the Warsaw Convention, as modified. Emphasizing the American experience under the Convention, the current expectation of air carriers governed by the Convention as modified, and the considerations militating in favor of liability in this case, the *Day* court unanimously concluded that the activities of the TWA passengers at the Athens airport fell within the purview of the phrase "the operations of embarking." We agree with the result reached in *Day*, although our reasoning differs slightly, and note that there is a substantial interest in uniformity of decision in this area. Cf. *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323, 337 (5th Cir. 1967), cert. denied, 392 U.S. 905 (1968).

TWA has urged us to devise an easily predictable rule as to when liability attaches. We agree that this is desirable. However enticing as such an approach might

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<sup>8</sup> In addition to noting the Supreme Court's denial of certiorari in the *Day* case, counsel have furnished us the Memorandum of the United States, as amicus curiae in that case, filed by the Solicitor General with the Supreme Court in September 1976, concluding that the "petition for a writ of certiorari should be denied." That Memorandum includes a detailed analysis of the relevant sections of the Warsaw Convention, and a consideration of *Evangelinos v. Trans World Airlines, Inc.*, Opinion of May 4, 1976 (3d Cir., No. 75-1990), the panel decision of this court which underlies the instant rehearing in banc, *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971) (stating at pages 12-13 that *MacDonald* appears consistent with *Day* and the May 4, 1976, panel opinion in this case), and *Maché v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit Aerien 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970) (concluding that, to the extent the *Maché* case is inconsistent with *Day*, "the view appears to be in the nature of dictum [and] the extent to which it will be adhered to in future cases may be a matter of some doubt").

## Appendix B.

be, we cannot accede to the notion that a line can be drawn at a particular point, such as the exit door of an air terminal which leads to the airfield. This is because a test that relies upon location alone is both too arbitrary and too specific to have broad application, since almost every situation and every airport is different. In our view, three factors are primarily relevant to a determination of the question of liability under Article 17: location of the accident, the activity in which the injured person was engaged, and the control by defendant of such injured person at the location and during the activity taking place at the time of the accident alleged to be "in the course of any of the operations of embarking,"<sup>9a</sup> may be relevant to the decision under Article 17, and bear significantly upon the tests of activity and location.

In so recognizing, we place less weight upon carrier control over passengers than did the *Day* court. While control remains at least equally as important as location and activity, it is an integral factor in evaluating both location and activity. A standard based primarily upon these three factors seems best calculated to effect the policies underlying Article 17.

Giving the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of embarking" a common sense construction, we

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<sup>9a</sup> For example, the fact that the airline exercised strict control of passengers at the time of checking their baggage near the entrance to the airport terminal building might be irrelevant to the location and activity factors where such control was relinquished and only reassumed after entry into the line formed for going through the gate leading to the walkway or passenger bus transportation to the aircraft. Another possibly relevant factor is whether the cause of the accident is a hazard of air travel as it exists at the time of the accident, since the Warsaw Convention was concerned with such hazards. The extensive use of air travel in international transportation of people has made terroristic attacks common in and near major airport terminals, even though they also take place at other locations. See Note, *supra* note 7, at 382-87 (IV C).



## Appendix B.

agree with plaintiffs' contention that we must examine the nature of the activity in which plaintiffs were engaged to determine if that activity can fairly be considered part of "the operations of embarking." Nothing in the Convention defines the term "operations of embarking" or otherwise defines the period of liability prior to entering the aircraft door. Nevertheless, for substantially the same reasons expressed in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, supra*, 528 F.2d at 33-34, we believe it is appropriate under all the facts and circumstances of this case to view the pre-boarding searches as part of the "operations of embarking."

The undisputed facts reveal that, at the time of the attack, the plaintiffs had completed virtually all the activities required as a prerequisite to boarding, and were standing in line at the departure gate ready to proceed to the aircraft. The plaintiffs' injuries were sustained while they were acting at the explicit direction of TWA, and while they were performing the final act required as a prerequisite to boarding buses employed by TWA to take the Evangelinos family to the aircraft. More significantly, at the time these operations had commenced, Flight 881 had already been called for final boarding. As a result, TWA passengers were no longer mingling over a broad area with passengers of other airlines. Instead, acting pursuant to instructions, they were congregated in a specific geographical area designated by TWA and were identifiable as a group associated with Flight 881.

By announcing the flight, forming the group and directing the passengers as a group to stand near the departure gate, TWA had assumed control over the group and caused them to congregate in an area and formation directly and solely related to embarkation on Flight 881. This conclusion is supported by the fact that TWA service personnel were standing at Gate 4, guiding the passengers, and TWA security personnel were present. Under these

## Appendix B.

circumstances, it is reasonable to conclude that TWA had begun to perform its obligation as air carrier under the contract of carriage and that TWA, by announcing the flight and taking control of the passengers as a group, had assumed responsibility for the plaintiffs' protection. Thus, for all practical purposes, "the operations of embarking" had begun. This conclusion is supported by *Blumenfeld v. Bea*, 1962 Z. Luft. R. 78 (Berlin Court of Appeals 1961), a case which would allow coverage under the facts present here.<sup>9</sup>

Neither *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), nor the French case of *Maché v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit [Aerien] 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd*, Rev. Fr. Droit [Aerien] 311 ([Cour] de Cassation 1970) (reprinted in translation as Exhibit B to appellee's brief), is inconsistent with the conclusion that "the operations of embarking" had commenced at the time of the accident in this case. First, both cases involved disembarking, where the nature and extent of the carrier's control over the passenger and the type of activity in which plaintiff was engaged differed significantly from the case at bar.<sup>10</sup> Further, both the *MacDonald* and *Maché* courts

<sup>9</sup> In *Blumenfeld*, the plaintiff fell and broke her leg and ankle on the stairs leading from the waiting room for departing passengers to the traffic apron. The Berlin Court of Appeals, in interpreting Article 17, stated that "the air carrier takes charge of the flight passengers when he requests them to go from the waiting room to the aircraft. Already at that time the air carrier begins to carry out the transportation contract, the essential accessory obligation of which consists in providing for the safety of passengers in every respect and in securing the traffic which was begun." (Translation agreed upon by counsel for all parties.)

<sup>10</sup> The recent case of *Hernandez v. Air France*, No. 76-1146 (1st Cir., Nov. 19, 1976), makes clear that the First Circuit's earlier decision in *MacDonald* is not in conflict with the conclusion which we reach here. In *MacDonald*, the plaintiff was injured

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## Appendix B.

considered the Convention's original goal of developing rules to govern the risks then thought to be inherent in air carriage and concluded, on that basis, that the Convention did not apply because the plaintiffs had reached "safe" points, distant from such risks. *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, *supra* at 1405; *Maché v. Air France*, *supra*. See also Sullivan, The Codification of Air Carrier Liability by International Convention, 7 Journal of Air Law 1, 20 (1936). Since the danger of violence—whether in the form of terrorism, hijacking or sabotage—is today so closely associated with air transportation, the tripartite test we adopt here is more realistic in determining a "safe place" removed from air transportation risks. Here, ap-

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while she was waiting for her baggage in the baggage claim area of Boston International Airport. She was in no sense under the control of the airline or acting as a part of a group under direct airline supervision. *In Re Tel Aviv*, (D.P.R., Dec. 19, 1975) (No. 518-72, et al.), *aff'd sub nom., Hernandez et al. v. Air France*, — F.2d —, No. 76-1146 (1st Cir. Nov. 19, 1976), a disembarkation case arising in the same Circuit as *MacDonald*, nevertheless apparently subscribes to the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite (location, activity and control) test, but held that the plaintiff (in *Hernandez*) even under that test could not recover. In affirming the district court, the First Circuit endorsed and applied this tripartite test, saying:

"We do not view our holding in *MacDonald* as necessarily foreclosing the adoption of the *Day-Evangelinos* tripartite test, and we believe that the nature of a plaintiff's activity when injured, its location, and the extent to which the airline was exercising control over plaintiff at the time of injury are certainly relevant considerations in determining the applicability of Article 17. On the facts of this case, however, the application of these criteria require the conclusion that plaintiffs did not have the right to recover under Article 17."

*Hernandez*, *supra*, slip op. at 4-5.

Also we note that the plaintiff in *Maché* was arguing against the applicability of the Warsaw Convention and that the court in *MacDonald* held that the plaintiff's injuries in that case were not caused by an "accident" within the meaning of Article 17.

## Appendix B.

plying that test, we conclude that the plaintiffs were not located in a "safe place," removed from risks now inherent in air transportation.<sup>10a</sup> To reach any other result would be to freeze the Warsaw Convention in its 1929 mold, when air travel was in its infancy, and to ignore current air travel procedures and the special risks created by the type of violence that resulted in this tragedy.

Nor are we convinced by TWA's principal argument that "the operations of embarking" can never occur within the physical confines of an air terminal building and that the Warsaw Convention is, therefore, inapplicable. Starting, as we must, with the actual language used in Article 17, we are struck by the fact that nothing in Article 17 suggests a limitation on the period of liability based strictly on the location of the "operations of embarking or disembarking." To the contrary, the contrast between the phrase "while on board the aircraft" and the phrase "in the course of any of the operations of embarking . . ." indicates that the draftsmen of Article 17 made a conscious choice to go beyond a mere location test. Further, adoption of the strict location test advanced by TWA could lead to differing results resting solely on the fortuity of where passengers are placed at the time of injury. In the absence of plain language compelling such a conclusion, we reject it.

Recognizing that nothing on the face of Article 17 supports its argument, TWA directs our attention to the treaty making history of that Article. The pertinent history consists of debates that centered around Article 20 of the draft Convention prepared by a small committee of experts,

<sup>10a</sup> *In Re Tel Aviv*, *supra*, which is cited in note 10, *supra*, indicates that these dangers of terrorism are continuing. Terrorist attacks occur where there are concentrations of people in order to secure maximum publicity and, therefore, are common in international airports, due to the large volume of international air travel. The large international airport terminals of 1973 did not exist either in 1929, when the Warsaw Convention was adopted, or in 1934, when the United States adhered to that Convention.



*Appendix B.*

Comité Internationale Technique d'Experts Juridique Aériens (CITEJA), for consideration at Warsaw. Article 20 of the CITEJA draft provided in part:

"The period of carriage, for the application of the provisions of the present chapter [Liability of the Carrier] shall extend from the moment when the travelers . . . enter the aerodrome of departure, up to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination . . . ."

When the draft Article 20 came up for consideration, it provoked considerable debate between those who endorsed the expansive aerodrome-to-aerodrome period of liability and those who espoused a more restrictive view. Minutes, Second International Conference on Private Aeronautical Law, October 4-12, 1929, Warsaw, 67-84 (R. Horner & D. Legrez transl. 1975) (hereinafter Minutes). Ultimately the principle of aerodrome-to-aerodrome liability was put to a vote and defeated. Minutes at 82-83. The problem of drafting a new article in conformity with the vote was then referred to a drafting committee and Article 17 in its present form emerged.

TWA contends that the rejection of the CITEJA draft demonstrates that the delegates intended to exclude from the period of liability the time during which passengers are inside air terminal buildings. We disagree. While the rejection of the CITEJA draft indisputably reflected an intent to restrict the expansive period of liability envisioned by Article 20, nothing in the debates indicates that the line was finally and unalterably drawn at the walls of airline terminal buildings.<sup>11</sup> Surely if such an explicit line

<sup>11</sup> In 1929, the word "aerodrome" meant the entire airfield property on which there were several buildings used by passengers, as opposed to the single, large, air terminal building characteristic of major airports in this country today.

*Appendix B.*

had been intended, the language of Article 17 would now reflect it. Moreover, the debates indicate confusion among the delegates themselves as to the meaning of the rejection of the CITEJA draft. Minutes at 83-84.<sup>12</sup> We are, therefore, especially reluctant to draw conclusions which are not reflected in the work of a drafting committee that had the advantage of considering the debates contemporaneously.

The most that can be said is that the draftsmen rejected the concept of automatic liability (subject, of course, to the defenses provided elsewhere in the Convention) for all accidents within the limits of the departing or arrival aerodromes. Our conclusion that under certain circumstances there may be liability for some accidents within a terminal building is not inconsistent with that intent.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> We do not find the debates as clear as the dissent indicates. Although the delegates agreed that "rejection of [Draft Article 20] led to acceptance of the opposite principle," it is unclear as to what that "opposite principle" was. In *Day, supra*, the Second Circuit concluded that the Convention had adopted the views of Prof. Georges Ripert of France—the "dean of French writers on civil law"—who "proposed that the article be recast in terms broad enough to allow the courts to take into account the facts of each case." 528 F.2d at 34-35. In any event, it is clear from the final language of Article 17 that the strict Brazilian proposal, as articulated by the delegate from Great Britain, which would have limited the period of liability to the time when passengers were "on board the aircraft," was not adopted.

<sup>13</sup> In analyzing this case, as we have, in light of location and activity as well as the carrier's control over the passengers and the likelihood of injury by a cause inherent in air transportation, we have accommodated the concerns of those who opposed the CITEJA draft without doing violence to the language of Article 17. Cf. Shawcross & Beaumont, *Air Law*, at 441-42 (3d ed. 1966); Matte, *Traité de Droit Aérien Aeronautique*, at 404-05 (1964); Sullivan, *supra*.

The debates indicate that the principal fear was that carriers would be liable for injuries sustained by passengers at times when

(footnote continued on following page)

*Appendix B.*

Accordingly, the June 26, 1975, judgment of the district court will be reversed and the case remanded for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

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SEITZ, *Chief Judge*, dissenting, with whom ALDISERT and GIBBONS, *Circuit Judges* join.

The basic issue here is one of treaty interpretation, to which a provincial approach is presumably inappropriate.

The majority holds that the defendant airline is strictly liable under Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention for the injuries which plaintiffs sustained within an airport terminal while waiting to board their flight, since those injuries occurred "in the course of . . . the operations of embarking." I believe the majority's interpretation of Article 17 is unsupported by the relevant history of the treaty and is contrary to the views of several signatory countries.

The starting point of my analysis is the policy underlying the enactment of the Warsaw Convention. As originally adopted, the Convention was designed to shield the infant airline industry from potentially crippling damage awards for injuries caused by risks inherent in air transportation. In order to accomplish this objective, the treaty restricted an airline's potential liability to approximately \$8,300, in exchange for a presumption that the airline was

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*(footnote continued from preceding page)*

the airline had no control over what the passengers were doing. As Prof. Georges Ripert of France stated:

"There is real difficulty only for travellers, and this difficulty arises from the fact that the traveller has his independence . . ."  
Minutes at 73.

Virtually all delegates agreed that there should be liability while the passengers were onboard the aircraft—a period when the carrier has complete control over both the passengers and their environment.

*Appendix B.*

liable if the accident took place on board the aircraft or during embarkation.

Plaintiffs maintain that the signing of the Montreal Agreement in 1966 marked the rejection of the Convention's original goal and that the Convention, as modified by the Montreal Agreement, is now intended to afford protection solely to the passenger. While it is true that the Montreal Agreement increased the damage limitation to \$75,000 and established a system of liability without fault,<sup>1</sup> the Agreement retained in toto the other provisions of the Convention, including Article 17. Thus, while the potential recovery of those previously covered by the Convention was significantly increased, the class of passengers entitled to the treaty's protection and the types of accidents on which liability could be based remained the same. I therefore believe that the Convention's original policy of limiting an airline's liability for personal injuries caused by the unique perils of air navigation retains its vitality, notwithstanding the adoption of the Montreal Agreement. While I am not unmindful of the strong interest in providing injured passengers with an adequate recovery, where their injuries are otherwise within the coverage of the Convention, I believe this goal has been accomplished

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<sup>1</sup> It is significant to note that the United States was initially opposed to the principle of absolute liability since it viewed the fault requirement as a necessary protection for the growth of the airline industry. The subsequent retreat from this position occurred when the \$100,000 liability limit which the United States advocated was rejected by the other signatories to the treaty. Following the defeat of this proposal, the effective denunciation of the treaty by the United States appeared imminent. The inclusion of a system of liability without fault which was designed to reduce litigation and to provide quicker settlements was therefore suggested as a compromise measure in order to ensure United States acceptance of the lower liability limits. Lowenfeld & Mendelsohn, *The United States and the Warsaw Convention*, 80 Harv. L. Rev. 497 (1967).



## Appendix B.

through the increase of damage limitations and the elimination of the airline's "due care" defense.

The historical concern of the Convention drafters and delegates was with the unusual and grave risks which were then inherent in air travel. With this principle in mind, it is apparent that a passenger's location has a significant impact on the risks to which he is exposed. The farther a passenger is removed from the immediate vicinity of the airplane itself, the less likely it is that he will be injured by any of the unique perils which accompany air travel.

Certain dangers, such as the danger of skyjacking, are encountered once the passenger has boarded the aircraft. Obviously, the threat of skyjacking is not a substantial risk borne by passengers within the terminal. Hence, while skyjacking has been loosely labeled as a risk associated with air travel, *Hussel v. Swiss Air Transport Co.*, 351 F. Supp. 702 (S.D. N.Y. 1972), *aff'd* 485 F.2d 1240 (2d Cir. 1973), it is evident that such activity creates a risk only to those so situated as to be exposed to the danger.

Like skyjacking, sabotage or terrorist activity may pose a threat to passengers boarding or on board an aircraft. To this extent, I agree that terrorism is a risk which accompanies international air travel. I am unable to agree, however, that this particular hazard is an incidental risk of air travel when it occurs within the confines of an airport terminal. Rather, in my view, a terrorist attack inside an airport is no more likely than the bombing of a restaurant, bank or other public place. Accordingly, I believe the majority's conclusion that plaintiffs were injured as a result of a risk inherent in modern air travel is unwarranted. The particular hazards of terrorism which are unique to air navigation are simply not risks to which passengers in plaintiffs' proximity were exposed.

The importance of a passenger's location as it relates to the risks of air travel is underscored by the case law of

## Appendix B.

this country as well as that of other signatories to the treaty.<sup>2</sup> In the French case of *Maché v. Air France*, Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 343 (Cour d'Appel de Rouen 1967), *aff'd* Rev. Fr. Droit Arien 311 (Cour de Cassation 1970), the highest court in France determined that the Warsaw Convention only governs accidents arising on the ground at locations of the airport where passengers are exposed to aviation risks. In that case a disembarking passenger was led by 2 flight attendants across the traffic apron toward the terminal building. Due to construction work, a detour was taken through a customs area which was not on the traffic apron. The passenger accidentally stepped in a man-hole and was injured. In finding that the Warsaw Convention was inapplicable and did not restrict the passenger's potential recovery, the court ruled that the customs area in which plaintiff was injured was not an area exposed to risks of air navigation. Significantly, the court found that the only ground area where such risks were incurred was the traffic apron.

A case decided by the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, *MacDonald v. Air Canada*, 439 F.2d 1402 (1st Cir. 1971), also stresses the importance of a passenger's location in relation to the hazards of air travel. That case involved a 74 year old woman who mysteriously fell while awaiting her suitcase in the baggage area of an airport. The court affirmed a directed verdict in the

<sup>2</sup> As the majority correctly notes, there is a substantial interest in uniformity of decision in this area. *Block v. Compagnie Nationale Air France*, 386 F.2d 323 (5th Cir. 1967), *cert. denied*, 392 U.S. 905 (1968). I do not believe, however, that the interest in uniform international interpretation of the treaty, adverted to in *Block*, compels us to follow the Second Circuit's decision in *Day v. Trans World Airlines*, 528 F.2d 31 (2d Cir. 1975), *cert. denied*, 45 U.S.L.W. 3280 (October 12, 1976), petition for rehearing pending, since that decision is inconsistent with a decision of the highest court in France.

*Appendix B.*

defendant airline's favor on the ground that there was no basis for finding an "accident", the first requirement for invocation of the Convention. In any event, however, the court found that the injuries sustained by plaintiff did not occur during the operation of disembarking since that operation had "terminated by the time the passenger [had] descended from the plane by the use of whatever mechanical means [were] supplied and [had] reached a safe point inside of the terminal . . . ." 439 F.2d at 1405. The court reasoned that the Warsaw Convention was not intended to apply "to accidents which are far removed from the operation of aircraft." *Id.* at 1405.

A determination as to whether a passenger's injuries were sustained in an area exposed to the particular risks of air navigation is thus a necessary first step in deciding whether that passenger was injured during the course of the operations of embarking. Since I believe this threshold determination must be resolved against plaintiffs in this case, I would affirm the judgment of the district court. However, even assuming plaintiffs were injured at a location where the perils of air travel are logically encountered, I do not believe they were injured while in the course of the operations of embarking as required by Article 17. Rather, my reading of the Convention Minutes and the subsequent commentary on the treaty indicates that the delegates viewed the operations of embarking restrictively to include only the actual boarding of the airplane or, at best, the trip across the traffic apron from the terminal building to the plane. Under no circumstances were accidents inside the airport terminal regarded as within the scope of the treaty.

As the majority correctly observes, the present language of Article 17 resulted from the delegates' rejection of Article 20 of the CITEJA draft which would have imposed liability from the time of entry of the "aerodrome of departure" until the time of exit from the "aerodrome of arrival." During the debates on Article 20, several

*Appendix B.*

amendments were proposed to distinguish between the liability for carriage of passengers and that for transportation of goods. A representative example is the proposal by the delegate from Brazil which suggested that the language of Article 20 be amended:

"to replace 'from the moment when travelers, goods and baggage enter the aerodrome of departure up to the moment when they leave the aerodrome of destination' by 'from the moment when the travelers have boarded and the goods or baggage have been delivered to the forwarder'."

*Minutes at 71.*

The French Delegation would have amended Article 20 to limit the airlines' liability for injuries to travelers to those injuries sustained during the course of carriage. During the discussions which followed the various proposals, it became evident that there was considerable dissatisfaction among the delegates with the expansive provision for passenger liability embodied in Article 20 and a widespread feeling that the Article should be re-submitted to the Drafting Committee for revision.

Believing that important questions of substance rather than mere matters of re-wording were raised by the several proposed amendments, the delegate from Great Britain suggested that the Convention pass on the substantive issues before referring Article 20 to the Drafting Committee. He remarked as follows:

"It seems to me that here there are questions of principle upon which one can pass before the referral to the drafting committee.

"For example, as regards travelers, does liability begin, as it is said in the draft, upon the entrance into the aerodrome of departure, or does it begin when the traveler is on board the aircraft? Here is the divergence as it exists as regards the travelers: When must



*Appendix B.*

liability begin? Following the principle established in the draft of the Convention, or simply when the traveler is on board?

"It's a question upon which I ask that one pass before the referral to the drafting committee."

Minutes at 80-81.

These sentiments were echoed by the Reporter for the preliminary draft who stated:

"We should make a decision first of all on the carriage of travelers and then on the carriage of goods. The situation, in effect, can be different.

"In the carriage of travelers, there is a double solution possible: either maintaining the text which would consist in engaging the liability of the carrier as soon as the passenger enters the aerodrome, or accepting the suggestion which was made which consists in saying that the liability of the carrier is engaged as soon as the traveler has embarked on the aircraft.

"I point out again that this last solution, practically, is not one at all, and facilitates nothing at all, because the judge will always have to specify the moment when the liability of the carrier begins. In effect, the passenger can have stepped [sic] on the step-up of the aircraft, the step-up which is not an actual part of the aircraft, and be injured by another aircraft.

"Be that as it may, the proposal is very clear."

Minutes at 81.

The substantive question was then called to a vote.

So that there could be no doubt as to the precise question on which the delegates were voting, the delegate from Luxembourg emphasized that

"before deciding to refer to the drafting committee, it is indispensable to vote in the sense of the proposals made by the British delegation, which discriminated

*Appendix B.*

very well between the various cases. When the conference will have made a decision on these points which will be submitted to a vote, then the drafting committee will be able to work in a useful manner."

Minutes at 82.

The Brazilian Delegation likewise reiterated:

". . . I draw the attention of the Assembly to that upon which we are going to vote. It's a question of saying, whether the liability of the carrier begins as soon as the traveler enters into the aerodrome, which is a public place, or when he embarks on the aircraft."

Minutes at 82.

Thereafter, a vote was taken and the proposed draft of Article 20 was defeated. Following revision, the current Article 17 emerged from the Drafting Committee and was adopted.

The majority concludes that the debates indicate confusion among the delegates as to the meaning of the rejection of the CITEJA draft. I am unable to subscribe to this position in view of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. The objections which were voiced to the CITEJA draft of Article 20 and the several amendments which were proposed during the debates all reflect a common desire on the part of those opposed to the draft Article to restrict a carrier's liability for personal injuries to injuries which occurred on board or while the passenger was embarking. Agreement with respect to this limitation among the delegates who were critical of the CITEJA draft was almost universal. Naturally, certain questions were raised as to whether this alternative proposal would cover injuries sustained "in the case of the aircraft which is still in the hanger, which is on the traffic apron, which is taxiing etc. . . ." Minutes at 77. Questions were also posed as to

## Appendix B.

whether the proposal would cover a passenger injured on the stairway which leads to the interior of the aircraft. Minutes at 78, 81. None of the factual variations or hypothetical possibilities which were raised, however, even remotely suggested that the restrictive proposal might be construed to cover passengers within the terminal. To the contrary, it was in reaction to the imposition of liability under such circumstances that the proposal was conceived.

I therefore believe that in rejecting the CITEJA draft of Article 20, the delegates intended to signify their approval of a proposal which would limit an airline's liability for personal injuries to those injuries which occurred during flight or while the passenger was boarding. Their subsequent adoption of Article 17 must be viewed as an affirmance of this more restrictive concept of liability. It appears likely that the phrase "during the course of any of the operations of embarking" was inserted in order to make explicit that the Article covered the passenger who was on the stairway preparing to enter the airplane in addition to passengers who had already boarded.

If any confusion existed as to the scope of the terms "embarking" and "disembarking", it was limited to the question of whether the Convention embraced accidents which occurred while the passenger was physically proceeding from the terminal to the plane or whether it covered only mishaps during the actual physical process of boarding. At the Fifth International Congress on Air Navigation—held only 1 year after the Warsaw Convention was drafted—a leading expert on air travel, Mr. D. Goedhuis, presented a paper in which he summarized the prevailing interpretations of Article 17 as follows:

"Further, art. 17 mentions 'embarquement' and 'debarquement'. The question is how to explain these words? There are two views *viz*: a) in a broad sense: *i.e.* the embarking begins when the passenger leaves

## Appendix B.

the station-building on his way to the aeroplane, standing in the flying-field; the disembarking ends when the passenger, arrived at destination, enters the station-building; b) in a narrow sense, *i.e.*: the getting on board and the alightment only comprise the actual getting in and out of the aeroplane." D. Goedhuis, *Observations Concerning Chapter 3 of the Convention of Warschau 1929, Cinquième Congrès International de la Navigation Aérienne, 1-6 Septembre 1931* (The Hague 1931) at 1163-64.

While Mr. Goedhuis advocated amending Article 17 to reflect the broad interpretation of "embarking", he was opposed by others, including at least one delegate to the Warsaw conference itself, who argued that the narrow interpretation which confined liability to accidents occurring during the actual process of boarding, was the proper one. It is significant to note, however, that under either interpretation, the injuries suffered by plaintiffs in the instant case would be outside the scope of Article 17. I therefore conclude that plaintiffs were not injured in the course of "embarking" as that term was restrictively intended.

My conclusion is not altered by the modern legal theories of accident cost allocation on which the Second Circuit relies in part in *Day v. Trans World Airlines, supra*. The Second Circuit finds that a broad construction of Article 17 is appropriate since the airline is in the best position to distribute accident costs among all passengers and to assume preventative measures. While I do not question the soundness of these principles in appropriate contexts, I believe that the explicit goals and policies which were voiced by the delegates to the Warsaw Convention and reaffirmed by the signing of the Montreal Agreement in 1966 foreclose reference to them in defining the scope of Article 17. Had the signatories to the Convention wished



*Appendix B.*

to amend it in order to reflect modern developments in American tort law, they could have affirmatively acted in 1966 when the monetary damage limitation was increased and the airline's due care defense was eliminated. Their failure to do so should not be disregarded, particularly if we keep in mind that this is an international agreement.

It is also worthy of note that the majority approach will greatly expand the absolute liability of air carriers while, at the same time, inviting drawn out litigation to determine whether or not such liability attaches. The semi-automatic approach to determining absolute liability which I suggest would seem to more nearly accord with the intent of the drafters of the treaty and the objectives sought to be accomplished.

Having concluded that plaintiffs were injured at a location which was neither exposed to the hazards of air travel nor within the delegates' intended scope of coverage, I would ordinarily end my analysis. However, in view of the majority's emphasis on the activity in which plaintiffs were engaged at the time of injury, I feel compelled to state briefly my views as to the relevance of this factor and to address the majority's argument.

An examination of an individual's activity is only necessary, I believe, once it has been determined that the individual was situated in the immediate vicinity of an airplane where the risks of air travel are logically encountered. Obviously, the physical activity of walking toward a plane on the traffic apron or ascending the stairway to the plane's interior is no different than the activity in which a passenger engages at numerous locations within an airport. The distinguishing feature, therefore, must be the location at which this activity is performed.

Location, while important in identifying the potential class of passengers entitled to recover, is nevertheless not conclusive as to whether an individual passenger was in-

*Appendix B.*

jured while engaged in the operation of embarking. Rather, the injured victim's conduct must also be scrutinized in order to determine whether, objectively viewed, his activities were within the scope of Article 17. Clearly, an individual who is injured at a dangerous location while on a lark of his own cannot be said to be "embarking" and should not be permitted to recover under the Convention. Only those passengers who have departed from the safety of the terminal and are engaged in the activity of boarding or any of the steps which immediately precede boarding should be granted recovery.

Although conceding that plaintiffs had not completed the preliminary steps necessary to boarding their flight in that they had not been searched and had not departed from the search area to board the bus which would take them to their awaiting flight, the majority nevertheless concludes that by standing in line waiting to be searched, plaintiffs were engaged in the activity of embarking. It bases this conclusion on a finding that TWA has assumed control over the passengers and on its belief that terrorist attacks within an airport are inherent risks of modern air travel.

With respect to its assertion that TWA had assumed control over its passengers, the majority proves too much. It cannot be gainsaid that passengers who are actually boarding and even those who are proceeding from the terminal to the plane on the traffic apron are subject to the airline's authority. Control is therefore inherent under the more restrictive interpretation of Article 17 which I have proposed.

It is equally clear, however, that passengers at many locations within the terminal are also, to a large extent, under the control of the airline. The majority's control analysis is therefore, at best, imprecise. In apparent recognition of the over-inclusiveness of its control classification, the majority seeks to impose yet another restriction on the

*Appendix B.*

class of persons who are entitled to recover under Article 17, namely, membership in an identifiable group associated with a particular flight and located within a specific geographical area designated by the airline. In effect, however, this additional restriction elevates location to a position of critical importance. Control becomes a mere artifice to permit recovery within the terminal, yet under limited circumstances. *Blumenfeld v. Bea*, 1962 Z. Luft. R. 78 (Berlin Court of Appeals 1961), relied on by the majority, suffers from the same infirmity.

I therefore conclude that the factors relied upon by the majority in support of its conclusion that plaintiffs were engaged in the activity of embarking are largely irrelevant. Since I believe that plaintiffs' location within the airport terminal precludes their recovery under Article 17, I would affirm the judgment of the district court.